Beethoven and the Construction of Genius

Musical Politics in Vienna, 1792–1803

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Preface

This book is as much about the problem of social identity as it is about Beethoven. I use the history of Beethoven's initial success as a tool for considering the interrelationship between identity (both reputation and self-identity), social structure, culture, and action. My aim is to reexamine, from a critical standpoint, some of our often deeply embedded assumptions about value, talent, and creativity.

The image of Beethoven—haughty, scowling, and disheveled, as he is depicted in numerous portraits and busts—has been a part of the popular iconography of genius since the early nineteenth century. These images, and at least some of Beethoven's works, are familiar to many people who are otherwise unacquainted with the world of "high culture" music. As a part of our cultural common sense, Beethoven's identity as an exceptional musician appears transcendent. Beethoven is the quintessential genius of Western culture, and the history of how his reputation became established should interest sociologists, social psychologists, and cultural historians, because that history cannot be addressed fully by conventional musicological discourse alone.

In this volume I explore how Beethoven's reputation was initially established, what some of its social consequences were, and, to the extent that it can be answered, why Beethoven's renown took the form it did. I focus on how Beethoven's identity as an extraordinary musician was communicated to audiences outside his initially small circle of aristocratic admirers, and how, over the course of his first decade in Vienna, Beethoven became a culturally authoritative figure. I discuss the practical

ways in which Beethoven, his patrons, and other supporters can be understood as involved (though not always intentionally) in projecting an image of Beethoven as universally admired and as the heir to Mozart, and I contextualize these activities in terms of the social, organizational, and cultural structure of Vienna's musical world during the 1790s.

The first aim of this book is to provide an account of Beethoven's success that remains at the level of social activity and its milieu. This ethnographic history provides a springboard into the second and major purpose of this work—to document the structuration of the Viennese musical field as this structuration occurred in and through the development of Beethoven's prestige. In other words, we can observe Beethoven's cultural authority interacting with and influencing the criteria against which it was judged. I examine this reflexive process by considering some of the ways Beethoven's increasing reputation contributed to the initial emergence of an ideology of "serious" (as opposed to light) music. During the final years of the eighteenth century, amateur-oriented, dilettante musical values were increasingly challenged and obscured from within by a connoisseur culture of musical production and consumption. By following the history of Beethoven's success as it unfolded, I try to identify some of the links between Beethoven's eminence and the articulation of the notion of master composers in Vienna during the early part of the nineteenth century.

Even now, artistic standards and canons of taste are being debated in and outside of musical and academic fields, and programs for cultural reform abound. These programs range from suggestions for "reshuffling" personnel within the canon, to suggestions for substitutions, to appropriating official members of the canon for new social concerns, to abolishing canonic structures altogether in favor of postmodernist aesthetics and local and community arts. While these programs obviously vary in levels of ambition, they share a concern with the ways exclusive or "high" cultural forms are both inaccessible and inappropriate to the lived experience of a large proportion of the people to whom they are upheld as aspirational.

I too share this concern, but I will not address here the issue of which works or composers should be "in" or "out" of a musical canon (or whether there should even be a canon); that is a task for cultural critics. I prefer to step back from these issues and investigate instead the social processes through which authoritative aesthetic claims are established in the first place. By implication, this focus undercuts hierarchical ways of organizing artistic production and reception. It attempts to treat with

dignity the perspectives of those for whom (and for whatever reasons) Beethoven's extraordinary talent was not self-evident, and it does not do violence to the often-overlooked qualities of the numerous musicians who existed in Beethoven's shadow.

My intention is by no means to debunk Beethoven. Within the cultural framework devoted to its appreciation, Beethoven's music is rich and rewarding of close attention, as I continue to discover. At the same time, a deep appreciation of Beethoven need not be coupled with the idea that his works are "transcendent." Such a view appears vain when considered in a cross-cultural or historical context; more insidiously, it leaves unexamined the ways in which "great" men or women exist inevitably at the expense of other possibilities. Genius and its recognition require social and cultural resources if they are to be cultivated, and these resources are often micropolitically charged. I hope this exploration of Beethoven's artistic career will enlarge the potential for thinking about talent and genius as fundamentally social achievements.

CHAPTER 1

Beethoven and Social Identity

In the autumn of 1792 Beethoven set out for Vienna, where he had been invited to study with Haydn. The son and grandson of court musicians, Beethoven had, over the previous ten years, achieved a degree of distinction within the relatively homogeneous, court-oriented Bonn music world. After some preliminary (and rather severe) study with his father, he spent the years after 1780 as a pupil of Christian Gottlieb Neefe, who helped secure for Beethoven the position of deputy court organist in 1782. Throughout his time in Bonn, Beethoven continued to work at the court in several capacities. He also gained repute, through the Breuning family's private concerts, as a talented improvisational pianist. By 1792 he had produced about three dozen compositions, among them the two ambitious cantatas on the death of Joseph II (WoO 87) and the elevation of Leopold II (WoO 88), both commissioned by the Bonn Lesegesellschaft, one of the several groups to which he was informally linked.

These early distinctions, in addition to his age (he was not quite twenty-two), made the idea of travel to Vienna and a final apprenticeship with Haydn seem like a logical next step. In fact, Beethoven had already visited Vienna in 1787, but his stay was curtailed when he was called back to the bedside of his dying mother in Bonn. The object of this second trip was to enrich his artistry through study with Haydn and, perhaps more important, to gain the imprimatur of the celebrated composer; then he would return to Bonn to assume a key position in court music affairs. His Bonn circle had no reason to believe his leave was permanent, and it was the elector himself who paid for Beethoven's travel

and living expenses.[1] As Neefe noted in a 1793 issue of the *Berliner Musik-Zeitung,* Beethoven "went to Vienna at the expense of our Elector to Haydn in order to perfect himself under his direction more fully in the art of composition" (Thayer and Forbes 1967, 1:113).

Considering Beethoven's accomplishments up to December 1792, one could easily envision his continued success—a career not unlike that enjoyed by his teacher Neefe, his grandfather Ludwig, or any other of the many successful but now forgotten musicians of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. One could also imagine that, in the later words of his teacher Haydn, Beethoven might eventually "fill the position of one of Europe's greatest composers" (Landon 1959, 141). What was not so clearly foreseeable was the unique way Beethoven came to be identified during the subsequent decade and a half as the author of unconventional, often "difficult," and sometimes unprecedentedly lengthy works such as the sonatas "quasi una fantasia" of 1801, the "Waldstein" and "Appasionata" sonatas of 1803, the "Eroica" Symphony of 1805, and the "Razumovsky" quartets of 1806. Despite Beethoven's apparent attempts to emulate and extend compositional practices of his predecessors (in particular, Haydn and Mozart), his contemporary supporters and opponents alike perceived his works as unusual and even bizarre. The history of Beethoven's reception is punctuated by resistance to what were viewed as the composer's musical idiosyncrasies.

BEETHOVEN AND THE PREHISTORY OF THE MUSICAL CANON

Beethoven is often regarded as a "revolutionary" composer, a pivotal force in the development of music. The term *revolutionary* is strong but imprecise as an indicator of Beethoven's place in music history; moreover, it explains almost nothing. For a more comprehensive understanding of Beethoven's success among his contemporaries we need to view Beethoven's impact in the context of the changes that characterized high cultural musical life during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. During the years Beethoven lived and worked in Vienna, between 1792 and 1827, interest in "eternal" standards of excellence in music were articulated and disseminated, and concert repertories increasingly featured the works of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven as a musical trinity of master composers. Music historians have often referred to this period as the "prehistory" of the musical canon—the formative years in which

new models for the fundamental transformation in the assumptions of taste were initially articulated (Weber 1986).

During the 1980s, other scholars have outlined the contours of this trend toward musical "classics"[2] and, more generally, the emergence of the category "high art" as it occurred in both Europe and the United States (Zolberg 1981; DiMaggio 1982; Levine 1988; Tuchman and Fortin, 1989; Abrams 1985). Most work on the topic has focused on the middle and later nineteenth century, although, as several music scholars have remarked in passing (Weber 1986; Rosen 1972; Kerman 1983), developments in late eighteenth-century Viennese music ideology are best viewed as prototypical of the subsequent and eventually international shift.

A specific look at Beethoven's career can further illuminate this important reorientation in the early period of Viennese canon formation. As William Weber (1986) and Mary Sue Morrow (1989) have observed, Beethoven's special position in the Haydn-Mozart-Beethoven trinity was reflected in contemporary music programming practices. Later in the nineteenth century, it was with Beethoven's symphonies that the traditional eighteenth-century practice of programming a wide and, from the modern viewpoint, frequently incongruous mix of opera arias, sonatas, improvisations, overtures, and symphonies began to give way to the more formalized practice of programming only symphonic music (Weber 1986, 366). Moreover, Beethoven was the only composer whose works were celebrated regardless of their genre.[3] As Weber notes, "It was Beethoven's role that was special; Haydn and Mozart took second place, despite their seeming equality in the pantheon" (1986, 368).

Beethoven was not the first musician to write difficult or "connoisseur's" music. The gap between *Kenner* (expert) and *Liebhaber* (amateur) existed well before Beethoven arrived in Vienna. Rather, the late eighteenth century witnessed a shift toward a more highly articulated, self-conscious ideology of artistic greatness, as applied to secular music. Within this mindset of serious music, the composer-as-genius was reconceived as a figure who could command unprecedented autonomy and deference. Not until later in the nineteenth century, with the professionalization of the music occupation (and with the proselytizing activities of upper middle-class music aficionados), was this ideology disseminated internationally. Yet some of its earliest manifestations appear in the development of Beethoven's career in Vienna.

The particularities of Viennese musical culture were crucial to the

shape of Beethoven's success. Vienna was the first European city where a contemporary and youthful composer could be viewed as the heir to a canonic tradition that included not only Haydn and Mozart, but also J. S. Bach and Handel. The manner in which Beethoven was celebrated by his contemporaries thus helped to formulate an understanding of the musical canon that was, during the early years of the nineteenth century, unique to Vienna. By contrast, the English canon consisted of a growing historical consciousness of music within which the works of seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century composers (especially Handel) were revered, predominantly by aristocratic patrons. Whereas in Vienna previous "great" composers (Bach and Handel) were viewed as leading up to Mozart, Haydn, and Beethoven, in London contemporary musicians stood outside the canon. True, the English musical canon was predominantly aristocratic and during the eighteenth century it was increasingly articulated as a self-conscious ideology. However, the English canon was defined in opposition to contemporary music, which was conceived by its advocates as vulgar and decadent (Milligan 1983, chap. 1). In Paris, meanwhile, the musical canon emerged out of practical musical activity long before it was articulated as an ideological stance within the arts. It developed from the need to program standby works that companies knew and could perform with little rehearsal (Weber 1984a; 1992).

To understand Beethoven's success, we need to view it in the context of a wider reorientation of musical taste, as this reorientation occurred in a specific social and geographical setting. Furthermore, we need to consider how Beethoven's success affected the setting within which he operated. Exploration of the initial appearance of serious music ideology thus needs to include the impact of Beethoven's success on the shape and texture of musical life. In this study I illustrate how Beethoven's emergence as a genius composer depended on and simultaneously helped to construct a more general and specifically modern notion of creative musical genius. We need to understand the emergence of these two phenomena—music ideology and Beethoven's success among his contemporaries—as reflexively linked. Doing so illustrates some of the ways music history does not simply evolve or develop, but is rather articulated "from the inside" by real individuals with reference to institutional, cultural, and practical contexts and in light of local contingencies. By following the ways that particular individuals "made" music history, we can extend our understanding of the relationship between musical forms and social life.[4]

TOWARD A SOCIOLOGY OF BEETHOVEN'S REPUTATION

Beethoven's music was anchored to a new—or, for the time, alternative—set of aesthetic criteria and stylistic conventions. The newness of Beethoven's works was contested. Appreciation of his compositions was neither spontaneous nor universal. Beethoven's eventual success was the product of social mediation, and it would be unfair, for example, to accuse Beethoven's contemporary opponents of philistinism or musical ignorance or to argue that opposition to Beethoven consisted simply of conservative reactions. Equally unfair is attributing the failure of some of Beethoven's contemporaries to appreciate his work to "psychological inhibitions" (Graf 1946, 144; Slonimsky 1965, 3). Similarly, it is fallacious to argue that the artistic steps Beethoven took were those of a giant, and that if his contemporaries were unable to perceive their inherent value it was because they were too small or lacked vision. To account for Beethoven's talent in any of these ways is to hold a view that flatters the present-day viewer's so-called more advanced perspective; it also imposes our own aesthetic evaluative terms on a group for which they are not necessarily appropriate.

The crux of the problem with most Beethoven literature as it addresses the composer's reputation is that, to varying degrees, that literature consists of retrospective accounts that isolate the quality of Beethoven's works as the cause of his recognition. In these accounts, greatness emerges out of a kind of temporal conjuring trick. As the sociologist of science Michael Mulkay writes regarding scientific discovery (here understood as the product of individuals—of scientific "geniuses"), "The apparent temporal priority of discovery is something of an illusion. It is an illusion in the sense that discovery is socially accumulated over time, sometimes over . . . long periods . . . and *it is interpretively projected backwards upon earlier events*" (Mulkay 1986, 173; emphasis added). Discovery is, in other words, a trope or figure of discourse, a rhetorical mode of accounting for what gets done in science. So too within the arts, the tropes of genius require critical examination.

There is a precedent for this type of deconstructive work within musicology. In an essay entitled "Innovation, Choice and the History of Music," Leonard Meyer describes the "covert causalism" of many studies of musical influence (Meyer 1983, 3; see also Becker 1982). These studies, he suggests, often fail to make the issue of composer choice problematic in its own right, and thereby tend to depict the issue of influence

as purely musicological; in retrospect, influence is conceived as independent of the local, often mundane conditions under which composition occurs. This misconception of influence leads to overidealized and musically imperialistic conceptions of the compositional process, which sidestep the issue of social circumstance.

Just as compositional choice does not occur in a vacuum, neither does reception. Beethoven's recognition, for example, is often explained in ways that overemphasize his "own" talent at the expense of the social bases of his acceptance and celebration.[5] Yet it is through these bases that the layers of pro-Beethoven mythology and culture have "accumulated" (in Mulkay's sense) and enhanced Beethoven's image over time.

Posterity has been good to Beethoven. He has been beautified in both the plastic arts[6] and music scholarship, where so much of the field of Beethoven studies is occupied by hagiography. Mainstream musical history has therefore ensured a bias in favor of Beethoven's genius, an unacknowledged but nevertheless elaborate set of instructions for his appreciation. Because pro-Beethoven culture is so extensive, the experience of his music can be a very rich one. Yet to the extent that our attention to genius and its products (whether these are scientific discoveries or works of art) occurs from the perspective these cultures of appreciation provide, we are blinded to visions of how music history could have been otherwise. We close off from inquiry the issue of how and why some individuals, findings, and enterprises are celebrated over others, why some are perceived as exemplary and others not.

The social resources that make the identity of genius possible (beyond practical and material conditions) include such factors as what an audience will accept as legitimate, and when and from whom it will accept certain types of work. To ignore these issues is to mystify genius, to take it out of its historical and interactional contexts. Moreover, to decontextualize genius is to elide the moral and political character of many or most quarrels over what counts as "valuable" work—to preclude, in this case, a sociological consideration of aesthetics and of art forms, their social uses and social consequences.

We may, in other words, perceive Beethoven as the composer of truly great works, but this does not mean that the contemporaries who objected to his style were "wrong." We cannot assume that our responses will resemble those of the individuals we happen to study.[7] Rather, we need to build on the notion that classificatory schemes are socially constructed, and we need to make the reception and construction of meaning problematic. As Pierre Bourdieu suggests, "Whatever may be the nature of the message—religious prophecy, political speech, publicity image, technical object, etc.—reception depends upon the categories of perception, thought and action of those who receive it" (1968, 594n.). Categories of perception are located in particular times and places; what is set aside as valuable and, indeed, the structure of value and how it is allocated will also vary (for example, the degree of contrast perceived between *best* and *worst*). To make this structuralist observation is not to imply culture as deterministic, however—it is not to deny the ways that cultures are created and transformed by actors. Culture (or categories of perception) is constitutive of the reality we perceive and take for granted, but these categories are themselves created and recreated by socially located individuals and groups.[8] Sociological inquiry can therefore focus on the issue of how actors attempt to mobilize and manipulate the structures through which phenomena are apprehended.

In the case of Beethoven's reputation, this process requires a consideration of the ways musical criteria—the categories of perception through which reception occurs—were themselves subject to change and manipulation. This point is crucial to our understanding of Beethoven's reception since, as I discuss throughout this volume, Beethoven's evaluation entailed a two-way process of alignment between his works and the categories of musical value. I also explore the resources and activities that helped to authorize accounts of Beethoven's talent and to deflect and suppress hostile reactions to Beethoven's work. This approach entails a focus on practical activities, on how alignments between Beethoven and categories of musical worth were articulated, authorized, and disseminated. At the most general level, I consider the question, How is aesthetic authority produced and sustained?

To answer this question, it is necessary to gain distance from commonsense images of reception. That imagery depicts talent as residing solely in individual composers and works and as recognized by independent and separate individual "receivers" as a transcendent and immutable form of artistic truth. By contrast, I explore the ways reception is actively structured. From this perspective, talent is conceived of neither as independent of the interpretive acts of those who recognize it nor as reducible to those acts. Rather, talent is understood as emerging from and constantly renewed through the reflexive interplay, bit by bit, between perception and its object. In other words, Beethoven's artistic development and the reception of that development should be conceived as feeding

each other in a virtuously circular relationship, one which was capable of producing both greater appreciation of Beethoven's compositions and further scope for his future productions.

An analogy to love (whether civic, familial, or erotic) is relevant here: two or more individuals may collaboratively produce for each other a context in which they can act or be viewed felicitously, each being constructively occupied with making, mobilizing, and allocating resources for the acts (and the appreciation of acts) of another in virtuously recursive ways. Such virtuous circularity generates increasing devotion to its object, which in turn creates the space and confidence for future creative activity. Resources mobilized to nurture the artistic or love relationship are deflected from other potential relationships (and other love objects). This conception of how talent emerges and is nurtured enhances the traditional musicological understandings of a composer's work. It enables more explicit theorizing of the interrelation between the social production of taste and the social production of artworks themselves. This framework is crucial for the study of Beethoven's reputation, because only within it can the study of Beethoven's career avoid simply reinforcing the "Great Man" approach to music history.

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEETHOVEN'S PATRONS

Popular and contradictory imageries of Beethoven's status in Vienna during his lifetime abound and continue to accumulate. On the one hand, Beethoven is sometimes portrayed as having been ignored and unappreciated, which, as we will see, could not have been further from the case during Beethoven's first decade and a half in Vienna. Alternatively, he is portrayed as a composer "of the people," which is also inaccurate. When Baron Peter von Braun, the manager of the Theater an der Wien, appealed to Beethoven in 1806 (in reference to the audiences for *Fidelio*) to try to fill the entire house and thereby increase ticket sales, Beethoven's reply was, "I don't write for the galleries!" (Thayer and Forbes 1967, 1: 397–98). Chapter 2 describes the first fifteen years of the composer's career in Vienna, when Beethoven's musical public was primarily aristocratic. His lighter and more popular compositions aside, Beethoven was not, during these years, particularly concerned with appealing to middle-class audiences. His more esoteric and explicitly oriented seriousness was marked both by the ways his contemporaries compared his work to that of his fellow musicians and by his own attempts to define the quality

of his relationship with his patrons and his public. Public and more genuinely popular reception of Beethoven consisted of fleeting support during the years around 1814 and the Congress of Vienna—support, it should be noted, based on works (such as "Wellington's Victory") that modern music scholars often classify as potboilers.

Thus Beethoven's career was mainly private. It consisted of first, an approximately twenty-year period, punctuated by participation in public concerts for his own and others' benefit, during which he was well insulated within the world of aristocratic soirées, and during which he was extremely productive; second, a brief phase as a popular composer; third, by 1819, a retreat from public life and an increasing alienation from the public taste for the lighter styles of composers such as Johann Nepomuk Hummel and Louis Spohr; and fourth, a period during his last years in which there was a resurgence of interest in his work.

Neither Beethoven's middle-period popularity nor his ultimate recognition as the greatest of musical masters could have occurred without his initial lionization by aristocratic society during the 1790s and early 1800s. It is therefore important to view Beethoven's "first decade of unbroken triumphs," as Maynard Solomon calls it (1977a, 57), more closely—specifically, to understand the basis for elite receptivity to Beethoven. In addition, we need to inquire into how these aristocratic patrons, Prince Karl Lichnowsky in particular, assisted Beethoven in progressing from pianist, to pianist-composer, to, starting around 1800, a major Viennese and eventually international figure and a composer of large-scale symphonic works.

I explore the social circumstances of Beethoven's success by first presenting (in chapters 2 and 3) an outline of the cultural, economic, and organizational contexts of music making in Vienna when Beethoven arrived in 1792. Chapter 2 sketches some of the changes in musical culture to which Beethoven's success was reflexively linked. I describe the transition in musical taste, from dilettante values to values of musical seriousness, and consider the vicissitudes of Mozart's reception as well as the activities of one of Vienna's most active patrons in light of changes in musical aesthetics and practice between 1787 and 1805. In chapter 3 I examine the changing economic basis of musical patronage and the implications this change had for music's aristocratic patrons, in order to consider the extent to which the aristocratic predilection for "serious" music may have been linked to a concern with maintaining prestige in a changing patronage climate. I then outline how the organizational basis

and cultural outlook of late eighteenth-century aristocratic musical life created a predisposition toward musical stars and toward the notion of musical genius.

Beginning with chapter 4, I turn my attention to Beethoven himself and describe his connection to prominent Viennese patrons. By comparing Beethoven's early career to that of Jan Ladislav Dussek, I examine resources that were available to Beethoven but beyond the reach of most of his fellow musicians, and I suggest that it was because of a variety of social and cultural forms of capital that Beethoven was well positioned to become "the next Mozart." In chapters 5 through 8 the focus shifts to the level of social action, specifically to some of the more mundane tasks that contributed to the construction of Beethoven as both a successful composer and a creative genius. Chapter 5 describes how early claims of Beethoven's special promise were substantiated and mobilized to present Beethoven as an extraordinary talent. A particular mythic account of Beethoven's relation to Haydn was elaborated over time, and I consider some of the reasons why Beethoven and Haydn were willing to collaborate to produce a fiction that became a resource for the construction of Beethoven's greatness. Chapter 6 addresses Beethoven's place in the life of Vienna's aristocratic salons. I discuss how his music was experienced by its contemporary hearers and some of his patrons' activities that ensured his music was heard sympathetically. It was in this world of aristocratic salons that a claim to Beethoven's greatness was initially constructed and where he was first produced as an authoritative figure. Chapters 7 and 8 are devoted to particular aspects of Beethoven's career and success. Chapter 7 examines an important but overlooked moment in the history of Beethoven's reputation and the success of the discourse of musical genius. That event is Beethoven's piano duel with the Austrian pianist-composer Joseph Wölffl in 1799, which I discuss in order to explore the terms in which high culture music was debated, and also to locate the social ideology for which Beethoven stood. Chapter 8 considers how a pro-Beethoven aesthetic was initially routinized through two forms of music technology, the piano and musical critical discourse in the then leading German-language music periodical, the *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung*. Finally, in chapter 9, I summarize the contributions that a study of the social bases of Beethoven's success and abilities can make to the more general topic of the construction of identity. I discuss the implications of this study both for the shape and texture of high cultural musical life today and for the ways we conceive of the identities of individuals, in social research and in everyday life.

CHAPTER 2

The Emergence of Serious Music Culture, 1784-1805

In 1784 Georg Friedrich Richter, Ludwig Fischer, and Mozart collaborated in offering a series of subscription concerts to feature their works. Mozart was pleased with the success of this venture, noting that he had managed to attract 174 subscribers, 30 more than the two of his partners together (Jahn 1882, 2:287; Morrow 1989, 56). He wrote exuberantly to his father: "The first concert on March 17th went off very well. The hall was full to overflowing; and the new concerto [possibly K. 449] I played won extraordinary applause. Everywhere I go I hear praises of that concert" (Anderson 1938, 1:872). During the middle 1780s Viennese concert life was booming and Mozart was at the height of his fame, giving more confirmed concerts than any other musician in Vienna (Moore 1991, 95).

Mozart's popularity was also clearly reflected in the music press.[1] In 1783, for example, the Viennese correspondent for Cramer's *Magazin der Musik* (one of the earliest German-language music periodicals) described a performance of *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* (*The Abduction from the Seraglio*) as follows: "It surpassed the public's expectations and the author's taste and new ideas which were entrancing received the loudest and most general applause" (Deutsch 1965, 214). A month later in the same periodical, a writer reported that the sonatas K. 376, 296, and 377–80 for piano and violin were "rich in new ideas and traces of their author's great musical genius. . . . Amateurs and connoisseurs should first play them through for themselves and they will then perceive that we have in no way exaggerated" (ibid.).

By 1789, however, Mozart's fortunes had changed. Attempting to mount another subscription series, Mozart was able to find only one subscriber, Baron Gottfried van Swieten, who is discussed later in this chapter. After circulating a subscription list for two weeks, Mozart was forced to abandon the plan. On the basis of this evidence, numerous scholars (myself included) have suggested that Mozart's reputation and his popularity declined in the later years of his career.[2] While there does appear to have been a shift in Mozart's fortunes, new light shed by current and ongoing research into Mozart's reception during the years after 1787 has contributed to a more complex picture than that portrayed in previous accounts.

On the basis of his recent discovery of the box office receipts for *Così fan tutte* and the revival of *Le nozze di Figaro* in 1789, the music historian Dexter Edge (1991) has suggested that Mozart's operas remained well attended during the later period of the composer's career. Edge has documented how performances of Mozart's operas compared favorably, in financial terms, with performances of operas by other composers. If Mozart experienced any "failure" in later life, this lapse needs to be seen in the more general context of public concert life during the late 1780s, which was apparently experiencing a temporary decline. (The ebbing in interest began around 1788 and lasted until about 1797.)

In two recent studies (Braunbehrens 1989; Moore 1992), scholars have observed that concert activities dropped off during the later 1780s. Julia Moore suggests that

> the apparently small number of public concerts in Vienna during the later 1780s was related to the extraordinary public concert activity there during the mid-1780s—namely public concerts were wildly fashionable for a few years until they became tiresome, when the upper aristocracy then turned to other sorts of musical activities. What these new activities may have been is a subject for further research and discussion. In other words, Mozart was very, very lucky to be *the* fashionable performer in Vienna at precisely the right moment. (1992, 96)

Thus the failure of Mozart's proposed concert series in 1789 cannot be read as a clear indication of his unpopularity, but should rather be viewed as indicating a more general decline of aristocratic interest in the public concert forum.

These recent reconsiderations of Mozart's reputation in Vienna belie the idea that the composer's popularity waned during the final years of his career. At the same time, the documentary evidence collected in Deutsch 1965[3] does indicate that the reception of some of Mozart's music shifted during the years after 1787, at least with regard to his more connoisseur-oriented and self-consciously serious works. In 1787, for example, a writer for *Magazin der Musik* (which had lavishly praised Mozart four years earlier) describes Mozart as "the most skillful and best keyboard scholar I have ever heard; the pity is only that he aims too high in his artful and truly beautiful compositions, in order to become a new creator, whereby it must be said that feeling and heart profit little." The critic then suggests that the harmonically adventurous *Haydn Quartets* were "too highly seasoned—and whose palate can endure this for long? Forgive this simile from the cookery book" (Deutsch 1965, 290). In 1789, the same magazine compared Mozart with the more senior composer Leopold Kozeluch:

> The works of . . . [Kozeluch] maintain themselves and [in Vienna] find access everywhere, whereas Mozart's works do not in general please quite so much. It is true, too, and his six quartets for violins, viola, and bass dedicated to Haydn confirm it once again, that he has a decided leaning towards the difficult and the unusual. But then, what great and elevated ideas he has too, testifying to a bold spirit! (ibid., 349)

The culinary metaphor (from which our concept of taste is descended) was common in eighteenth-century musical discourse. The *Haydn Quartets* apparently "disagreed" with Prince Anton Grassalkowitz as well; according to a story reported in the *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung*, the prince refused to believe that such discords could have been intended by the composer, and he demanded of his musicians to see the score. When he found that the music he had heard did indeed correspond to the notations, he tore up the score in a rage. An Italian purchaser reputedly sent back the score to its publisher, Artaria, believing it full of printer's errors (King 1955, 5).

The Viennese reception of *Don Giovanni* also may have been mixed, judging from references to it in the diary of Count Karl Zinzendorf, who has been suggested by music historians as a typical representative of aristocratic musical taste (Morrow 1989; Edge 1991). Zinzendorf initially notes that he found the music "agreeable and very varied" on 7 May 1788. Then on 12 May he writes, "Mme de la Lieppe finds the music learned, little suited to the voice." On 16 June Zinzendorf notes simply that he had attended the opera and that one of the singers was "informally dressed," and on 23 June, after his fifth or more attendance at *Don Giovanni* (repeated attendance was conventional), he observes that he "was very much bored at the opera Don Giovanni" (Deutsch 1965, 313,

314, 319).[4] In a similar vein, the *Journal des Luxus und der Moden* observes in February 1791 that the opera was "here and there very artificial and overloaded" (ibid., 386). In general, Mozart may have remained popular until his death, but available documentary evidence indicates that some of his work after the middle 1780s was controversial and met with mixed responses. We do know that clear objections to Mozart's music were made in response to Mozart's compositional complexities. These complexities may be understood as reflecting an aesthetic reorientation of Mozart's closest aristocratic patrons during these years—a shift away from an emphasis on music as entertainment and toward the pleasures and values of the musical connoisseur.

Between 1782 and 1789, Mozart began to collaborate more closely with one of the few aristocratic patrons in Vienna actively engaged in promoting the concept of "serious" music, Baron Gottfried van Swieten. During the mid-to-late 1780s, van Swieten was an important court official; as head of the Austrian education department, he played a leading role in the period of enlightened Josephian reform. Mozart took part in van Swieten's Sunday noontime concerts (where participants sang Bach choral music, accompanied by Mozart on piano), and he orchestrated the four Handel oratorios, under instructions from van Swieten to "clothe Handel so solemnly and so tastefully that he pleases the modish fop on the one hand and on the other still shows himself in his sublimity" (Deutsch 1965, 337). Mozart also copied out Bach fugues for performance at van Swieten's. On 10 April 1782 he writes to his father:

> I have been intending to ask you . . . to enclose . . . Handel's six fugues and Eberlin's toccatas and fugues. I go every Sunday at twelve o'clock to the Baron van Swieten, where nothing is played but Handel and Bach. I am collecting at the moment the fugues of Bach—not only of Sebastian, but also of Emanuel and Friedmann. I am also collecting Handel's and should like to have the six I mentioned. I should like the Baron to hear Eberlin's too. (Anderson 1938, 2:800)

On 4 January 1783 Mozart writes:

> Then there are a few counterpoint works by Eberlin copied out on small paper and bound in blue, and some things of Haydn, which I should like to have for the Baron van Swieten to whose house I go every Sunday from twelve to two. Tell me, are there any really good fugues in Haydn's last mass or vesper music, or possibly in both? If so, I should be very much obliged to you if you would have them both scored for me bit by bit. (ibid., 835)

Mozart's contact with van Swieten probably enhanced the composer's interest in contrapuntal forms, an interest we see developed in pieces like the Fantasia and Fugue (K. 394), the Mass in C Minor (K. 427), the Fantasia in F Minor for Mechanical Organ (K. 608), and even the chorale of the two men in armor from *The Magic Flute* (Olleson 1967, 66–67). Edward Olleson has suggested that Mozart's study of counterpoint during these years occasionally "brought about a loss of Mozart's idiomatic personality and perhaps a dryness which is absent from most of his music," pointing in particular to the fugue of the unfinished Suite in C Major (K. 399) (ibid.). While other scholars will no doubt later specify the nature and extent of van Swieten's influence, it is reasonable to suggest that the musicians van Swieten patronized would have been receptive to his concern for "serious" music.

Van Swieten's influence on Mozart may be overrated, but at least two Mozart biographers have observed the notable increase of counterpoint in the works of his last years (Jahn 1882, 2:386–400; Olleson 1963, 1967). Olleson, for example, links the van Swieten influence to the emergence of what he views as Mozart's "masterpieces": "Inspired by Handel via van Swieten, by Bach via Lichnowsky or simply by his own inclination, Mozart produced in the last year of his life some incomparable masterpieces in a contrapuntal, not to say archaic idiom" (1967, 148). It is thus possible that the more learned, difficult aspects of Mozart's later works (as these were perceived by his contemporaries) were oriented to the concerns of van Swieten and his circle (which included Prince Lichnowsky, later Beethoven's closest patron). These connoisseur values would have constituted a minority view in Viennese musical life during the late 1780s, when categories of taste were still generally dominated by the concerns of the dilettante and general listener. Secular music was intended to please—to respond to general tastes and preferences—and "pleasingness," as a writer to the *Chronik von Berlin* notes in May 1791, was "a concept which has gained citizenship throughout the realm of thinking beings" (Deutsch 1965, 390). Mozart may have begun to orient himself to a consciously articulated notion of masterpieces at a time when the prevailing winds of musical fashion were still directed away from (in the words of the contemporary chronicler of music Dr. Charles Burney) the "unmeaning art and contrivance" of J. S. Bach, which, while never entirely out of fashion in Catholic Austria,[5] played a diminished role in secular musical life. The "counter-reform" of musical taste in Vienna had not yet begun.

The ubiquity of pleasingness as a value in late eighteenth-century European music discourse is undeniable. According to Burney, the notion referred to a concern with "nature and facility." In terms of more con-

crete compositional techniques, these values tended to be translated into music that was relatively easy to comprehend and play and into an aesthetic of amateurism. Johann Ferdinand von Schönfeld, for example, said in his *Jahrbuch der Tonkünst von Wien und Prag* (1796, 390) that he could confidently recommend the works of Leopold Kozeluch, one of the most popular Viennese composers of the 1790s, to "amateurs of the clavier." Similarly, the *Musikalische Real Zeitung* has this to say about the pianist-composer the Abbé Sterkel in 1789: "No excess of modulations to remote keys, no awkward difficulties or neck-breaking passages; but pleasant, flowing melody, well-ordered progress and—what is so rarely achieved by many of today's fashionable composers—tonal unity characterize these sonatas of Herr Sterkel" (Komlós 1987, 229).

As the Haydn scholar Jens Peter Larsen observes, "Scarcely at any other time in European history of music is there such an unmistakable endeavor to write music which is at the same time enjoyable to both [amateurs and connoisseurs]" (1967, 131). Just as musicians had not yet escaped the domestic role that had been shaped for them at the turn of the eighteenth century, neither had music itself moved away from its ancillary role in the settings within which it was made. In secular arenas and in 1780s Vienna, music was meant to entertain; it was not yet commonly conceived as an end in itself. Thus Mozart's cultivation of a learned style may have come at a time when the concept was not generally disseminated and receptivity was scant. During the late 1780s, van Swieten and those who shared his interest in a musical "greatness" constructed from Baroque models were a fringe group within the world of aristocratic music patronage.

Any gap that may have been felt during Mozart's lifetime between his over-learnedness and his more popular works was quickly bridged, however, after his death. During the early 1790s and later, Mozart was hailed (initially in the Prague press[6]) as "immortal Mozart" whose "death came too soon both for [his widow] and for Art"—as Constanze Mozart herself puts it in the announcement of a benefit concert published in the *Wiener Zeitung* on 13 December 1794 (Deutsch 1965, 471). This posthumous rediscovery of Mozart revolved around imagery of the composer culled from his life before his genius had reached its fullest flower. The precise genus and species of that flower became the object of dispute, however, as Mozart's posthumous prestige became a resource for the reputations of potential musical heirs. In other words, association with Mozart became a way of articulating status claims.

During the early 1790s, Prague writers made efforts to highlight their city for its aesthetic foresight in appreciating Mozart. A review of a Mozart concert in the *Prager Neue Zeitung* of 9 February 1794 reads:

> It is easy to imagine how full the hall was, if one knows Prague's artistic sense and its love for Mozart's music. Mozart's widow and son both wept tears of grief at their loss and of gratitude towards a noble nation [i.e., Bohemia]. Thus this evening was fittingly and admirably devoted to an act of homage to merit and genius . . . a small tribute to the unspeakable delight that Mozart's divine tones often drew from us. . . . It is as though Mozart had composed especially for Bohemia; nowhere was his music better understood and executed than in Prague . . . many were the hearts that Mozart's great genius won for itself. (Deutsch 1965, 469–70)

Again, in April of the same year:

> The esteemed Prague public, which well knows how to honour the name of Mozart. . . . The boy Mozart, the son of the immortal man whose divine harmonies will continue to delight us to the end of our days, is to be sent to Prague for the benefit of his education and upbringing; this being at the instigation of his noble patron, His Excellency the Baron van Swieten, who places full confidence in the spirit of the Bohemian nation. (ibid., 471)

Some commentators remained skeptical. In *Teutschlands Annalen des Jahres 1794*, for example, Haydn is favorably compared with Mozart for the former's more explicit attempts to please the public:

> In this year 1794 nothing can or may be sung or played and nothing heard with approbation but that it bears on its brow the all-powerful and magic name of Mozart. . . . That Mozart to a large extent deserves this applause will be disputed by no one. But that he was still in his years of ferment and that his ideas were still frequently in a state of flux, as it were—of this there are only too many instances in his works. If we pause only to consider his symphonies: for all their fire, for all their pomp and brilliance they yet lack that sense of unity, that clarity and directness of presentation which we rightly admire in Jos. Haydn's symphonies. . . . Moreover, one is often tempted, in hearing Mozart's works, to exclaim with the maid-servant in the comedy, "there's nothing natural about me, thank God!" An almost unadulteratedly spicy diet, which spoils the palate if one's taste for it continues; and in the hands of the wretched imitators, who think they need only to Mozartize in order to please, every trace of noble simplicity will finally be banished from music. Such could easily prove to be the final result of this general idolization. (ibid., 472–73)

By the middle 1790s, however, objections such as this were the exception, not the rule; in the German-language music periodicals, at least, the idea of "immortal Mozart" was widespread. Those aspects of his work that were earlier perceived as difficulties or impediments to the whole-

hearted recommendation of the composer were no longer mentioned: "Posterity does justice to the merits and genius of Mozart; his heavenly harmonies resound everywhere" (*Journal des Luxus und der Moden* [Weimar], July 1795); "During the past few years it has become clearly evident that the taste of our esteemed public has declared itself more and more in favor of Mozart's music" (*Gratzer Zeitung*, 26 August 1795; both sources cited in Deutsch 1965, 475, 476).

By the mid-1790s, Mozart's spirit had become an apparently universal resource and Mozart's death an untimely tragedy. What greater aspiration could there be for a young composer than to receive "Mozart's spirit," to be recognized as heir to the genius of Mozart? Just as Mozart's earlier mixed reception during the late 1780s can be considered as part of a reorientation by some aristocrats (away from the quasi-public concert and toward the more private forums of salons), so too can his posthumous renown. The 1790s' celebration of Mozart as a master composer was part of and contributed to a general reorientation of taste.

VIENNA'S MUSICAL ARISTOCRATS IN THE 1790s

In 1805, a Viennese correspondent to the *Zeitung für die elegante Welt* described the world of Viennese salons and notes of one that "Sunday mornings, and perhaps also Fridays are usually devoted *to true music,* which one never loses sight of here. The string quartets of Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven or Romberg, occasionally of Wranitzsky, are usually played. The easier keyboard music of a Pleyel, Vanhall, Kozeluch is *entirely out of style*" (trans. Morrow 1989, 9). In the sixteen years separating this observation from the 1789 description in *Magazin der Musik* of Kozeluch's accessibility over Mozart's complexity, a partial reorientation of aristocratic musical taste had occurred. This reorientation was articulated in periodicals and is supported by known repertory data. It consisted of a shift away from the prodilettante aesthetic and toward values of musical seriousness and learnedness. The new aesthetic was built primarily around the notions of complexity and of the musical masters, and around symphonic and chamber genre rather than virtuosic showpieces or opera highlights. Within this aesthetic, Mozart, Haydn, and especially Beethoven were highlighted as exemplars of all that was best in Viennese music, while Kozeluch (and numerous other composers like him) were reclassified as lesser contemporaries.

Much of the groundwork for this shift occurred in the private world of aristocratic salons, particularly as activity in these salons centered

on Beethoven, who was uniquely celebrated for the expressiveness and complexity of his compositions. Beethoven was known in this arena primarily as a connoisseur's musician and he was increasingly famed for what his contemporaries came to refer to as a "higher style of writing." As one critic writes, "Less educated musicians, and those who expect nothing more from music than a facile entertainment will take up these works in vain."[7]

Who, then, were the members of this world, what were their concerns, and how did they relate to other music patrons who were not Beethoven partisans? As a start toward answering these questions, Table 1 classifies, by social background, the musical dilettantes and patrons listed in Schönfeld's *Jahrbuch.* The small size, not only of this group but of the aristocratic population in comparison to the Viennese population at large, is striking: at this time Vienna was a city of approximately 200,000, growing to 317,768 by 1830 (Moore 1987, 76). According to Johann Pezzl, who wrote a series of guidebooks on Vienna during the

TABLE 1

VIRTUOSI, AMATEUR MUSICIANS, AND MUSIC PATRONS IN THE VIENNESE HIGH CULTURE MUSIC WORLD, AS LISTED IN SCHÖNFELD 1796[a]

First aristocracy by rank		
Princes/princesses	3	
Counts/countesses	19	
Barons	1	(van Swieten)
Total	23	(12%)
Second aristocracy by rank		
Barons/baronesses	8	
Freiherr/freyerrin	6	
"von"	66	
Total	80	(43%)
Middle-class professionals (untitled court officials, doctors, professors, lawyers, painters, architects, intellectuals)	16	(9%)
Businessmen (untitled merchants, factory owners)	3	(2%)
Musicians	64	(34%)
TOTAL	186	(100%)

[a]Based on information contained in Johann Ferdinand von Schönfeld's *Jahrbuch der Tonkünst von Wien und Prag*. I am grateful to Dexter Edge for this information, which he compiled to expand and correct an earlier version of this table that I had published (DeNora 1991, 336, table 4); it will be published along with further analysis in a forthcoming publication by Edge.

late eighteenth century, in 1782 there were twenty-one families of princes, seventy of counts, and fifty of barons (altogether about a thousand individuals); this group, plus members of the then growing newly ennobled "second society," made up approximately 1 percent (2,611 people) of Vienna's population (ibid., 403).

Table 2 lists active concert hosts or organizers during the 1790s for whom there is extant documentary evidence.[8] An in-depth look at Baron van Swieten and his activities provides a clearer picture of the leading aristocratic musical culture during the 1780s and 1790s.

GOTTFRIED VAN SWIETEN: "PATRIARCH OF MUSIC"

Recognized by his contemporaries as the doyen of musical patrons, van Swieten was one of Beethoven's most important supporters during the composer's first decade in Vienna; Beethoven subsequently dedicated his first symphony to him in 1800. Although van Swieten played an important role during the period of Josephian reform, after Joseph II died in 1790 Leopold II annulled many of his brother's economic and political reforms. Van Swieten was, not surprisingly, relieved of his duties (on 5 December 1791, the day of Mozart's death).

Van Swieten's status as a Beethoven supporter was initially unique among Vienna's aristocrats. Until Count Moritz Fries began to patronize Beethoven nearly a decade later, Baron van Swieten was the only member of the initial Beethoven circle of close patrons who, though not born into an old aristocratic family, came to be counted as a member of that world. The son of Empress Maria Theresa's (ennobled) personal physician, van Swieten entered the civil service in 1755, serving as a diplomat in Brussels until 1757. He was then posted to Paris (1760–63), Warsaw (1763–64), and England (1764–69), and thereafter spent seven years in Berlin.

Olleson suggests that "it was perhaps thought that [van Swieten's] musical and literary interests would be a help in dealing with the King [Frederick the Great]. . . . In certain quarters at least, van Swieten's music was seen as his principal quality" (1967, 38). According to Olleson, a story circulated some years later in Vienna that the baron's musical interests were what secured him his position in Berlin. Van Swieten had been sent to Berlin to complete the delicate and complicated negotiations over the partition of Poland between Austria, Russia, and Prussia. When in Berlin he took an active part in a cultural life that differed considerably from Vienna's and was considered by Berliners to be far superior to that

TABLE 2

KEY VIENNESE MUSIC PATRONS IN THE 1790S AND 1800S

Count Anton Georg Appony (1751–1817): Member of GAC; frequent private concert host during the 1790s.

Baron Nathan Arnstein (1758–1818): Ennobled banker and regular private concert host c. 1800. His daughter reportedly played pianoforte music by Steibelt at one of the Arnstein salons.

Prince Auersberg (?–?): Member of GAC.

Count Batthyana (?–?): Member of GAC.

Baron Peter Braun (1758–1819): An industrialist (silk) ennobled in 1795, he was director of court theaters from 1794 to 1807. He stopped leasing them to private artists (making it more difficult for musicians to produce for-profit concerts). He also hosted weekly private concerts and kept a "Harmonie für Tafelmusik" (a table music ensemble).

Mme. Buquoy (?–?): Occasional private concert host during 1790s and 1800s.

Count Franz Josef Czernin (?–?): Member of GAC.

Countess Josephine Deym (?–?): Bimonthly private concert host 1804.

Prince Karl Johann Baptist Walter Dietrichstein (1728–1808): He or his son Franz Joseph (1767–1854) was a member of GAC.

Count Palfy von Erdödy (?–?): Member of GAC.

Count Johann Esterhazy (1774–1829): Member of GAC; occasional private concert host c. 1797.

Prince Paul Anton Esterhazy (1738–94): Though it is not always possible to distinguish among them, one of the several prince Esterhazys was a member of GAC. Other musically active Esterhazy princes during this period were Prince Nikolaus Joseph (1714–90), Haydn's patron and known as "the luxury-loving" prince, and Prince Nikolaus II (1765–1833), who recalled Haydn from London in 1794 and reconstituted the Esterhazy kapelle (ensemble), which Prince Paul Anton had dissolved after the death of Nikolaus I.

Count Moritz Fries (1777–1825): Member of GAC; regular private concert host c. 1799 (Monday evenings). Married Princess Maria Theresa von Hohenlohe Waldenburg in 1800. Haydn's *Creation* was performed at his Vienna palace on 4 April 1800, arranged for septet. He was a noted collector and arts patron, his library contained more than sixteen hundred volumes, and he possessed more than three hundred paintings. Fries's father was an ennobled banker.

Prince Golitzin (1721–93): Russian ambassador to Vienna, he hosted weekly private concerts from 1790 to 1793.

Count Leonard Harrach (?–?): Member of GAC. Schönfeld said he was also a fine dilettante musician (he played the flute).

Count Haugwitz (?–?): Regular private concert host c. 1802–7. In 1807–8 he initiated a series of "Concerts Spirituels."

Prince Ferdinand Johann Nepomuk Joseph Kinsky (1781–1812): Member of GAC; subsequently, along with Archduke Rudolph and Lobkowitz the younger, paid Beethoven an annuity to keep him in Vienna.

(Continued on next page)

TABLE 2 *(continued)*

Prince Karl Lichnowsky (1756–1814): Regular private concert host during the 1790s; after 1795 cohosted Friday morning performances of string quartets with Count Razumovsky. He was a member of the same Masonic lodge as Mozart, had been a pupil of Mozart in the 1780s, and had escorted Mozart on a foreign concert tour. Occasionally he hosted large-scale concerts (*Judas Maccabaeus* in 1794, according to Zinzendorf's diary). He was married to Countess von Thun.

Prince Joseph Franz Maximilian von Lobkowitz (1772–1816): Private concert host as early as 1793; founded a kapelle in 1794 (after 1797 his kapellmeister was Anton Wranitzky) and hosted premiers of some of Beethoven's symphonic works. One of the three patrons to provide Beethoven with an annuity in 1709, he was a keen amateur musician: cellist, singer, violinist, and composer.

Prince Joseph Maria Carl von Lobkowitz (1725–1802): Member of GAC; private concert host during 1790s. Married Maria Joseph née Countess Harrach in 1752. According to Landon (1976–80, 3:294) and Morrow (1989, 30), he hosted the concert at which Beethoven made his Viennese debut on 1 March 1795, though it is not clear to what event this claim refers, unless to a private premier performance of the concerto which Beethoven performed later that year at a public benefit concert with Haydn. There were two musically active Prince Lobkowitzes between the years of 1795 and 1802 (there were two lines of the family—see later) and it is not always possible to distinguish between them in contemporary reports. Zinzendorf refers to the second as "the younger" (see later).

Prince Paar (?–?): Occasional private concert host during the 1790s.

Herr Paradis (?–?): Weekly concert host 1809. His blind daughter gave concerts of pianoforte music.

Herr Quarin (?–?): Middle-class occasional private concert host in 1809, according to Rosenbaum (1968).

Mme. de Rittersberg (?–?): Weekly private concert host 1809, according to Rosenbaum (1968). Prince Lobkowitz loaned her personnel for her concerts in 1809, according to Reichardt (1915).

Eleonore and Imanuel Schikaneder (?–?): Directed Theater an der Wien from 1801 to 1806.

Herr Schmierer (?–?): Middle-class regular private concert host c. 1801–3, according to diarist Joseph Carl Rosenbaum (1968). The concerts tended to present chamber music rather than larger orchestral pieces, though Haydn's *Creation* and *Seasons* were performed here. Rosenbaum's wife performed here.

Hofrat Schubb (?–?): Middle-class regular private concert host (performances of chamber music) c. 1802–3, according to Rosenbaum (1968).

Prince Josef Johann Nepomuk Schwarzenberg (1769–1833): Member of GAC (most GAC concerts took place at his home); his wife, Princess Pauline Karolina Iris von Arenberg-Archot, hosted concerts during the 1790s. The first performances of Haydn's *Seasons* and *Creation* were held at his winter palace in Vienna.

Count Sinsendorf (?–?): Member of GAC; not to be confused with Count Karl von Zinzendorf.

TABLE 2 *(continued)*

Baron Nathan Spielmann (?–?): Weekly private concert host 1802.

Baron Gottfried van Swieten (1733–1803): The son of Empress Maria Theresa's personal physician, he was a civil servant and later diplomat in Brussels (1755–57), Paris (1760–63), Warsaw (1763–64), England (1769), and Berlin (1770–77). In 1777 he returned to Vienna, where he became a commander of the Royal St. Stevens Order and director of the Imperial Library. As head of the Austrian education department, he had a significant impact on cultural matters during Joseph II's reign. He was relieved of this office by Leopold II. Van Swieten was the director and founder of the Gesellschaft der Associierten Cavaliere (GAC) and a private concert host during the early 1780s and the 1790s.

Prince Ferdinand Trauttmannsdorf (1749–1827): Member of GAC; married Princess Carolina née Colloredo.

Baron Raimund Wetzlar (?–?): Son of ennobled banker; hosted the "duels" between Beethoven and Wölffl.

Baron Würth (?–?): Banker and regular private concert host 1804–5, he assembled an orchestra c. 1805.

Sources: Morrow 1989; Biba 1980; Hanslick [1869] 1979; Thayer and Forbes 1967; A. Schindler 1966; Nettl 1956; Schönfeld [1796] 1976; Landon 1970a, 1976–80, vols. 3 and 4; Jahn 1882, vols. 2 and 3; Moore 1987; Griesinger 1968; and Loesser 1954.

GAC, Gesellschaft der Associierten Cavaliere.

of their southern neighbors (ibid., 49). Van Swieten's tastes in music, as they shifted over the years between 1770 and 1777, reveal that his encounter with Berlin culture was influential. As Olleson describes the baron's changing interests, in 1770 his preference was for the "lightweight and modern," not the "great and noble" (and old); seven years later, he was an ardent spokesman for the serious in music and the ideology of greatness.

In Berlin literary circles, the Sturm und Drang (literally, storm and stress) movement was well under way by the time van Swieten arrived. Proponents emphasized a rejection of the rules of poetry and glorified feeling as opposed to reason. In the Sturm und Drang perspective, genius became "a slogan for complete rejection of discipline and tradition and was linked with creative spontaneity" (Wellek 1955, 1:176). The modern notion of creative genius appears to have been first articulated in northern Germany during the 1770s and 1780s, often in response to the works of Shakespeare, which were viewed less as theatrical works than as poetry and psychological portraiture (Wellek 1955; Murray 1989). It was also in northern Germany during the eighteenth century that the organicist metaphor was initially applied to creative works. Goethe, in

direct opposition to the culinary terms with which Mozart was evaluated, describes what he considers to be the "vile" notion of composition—"as if [an artwork] were a piece of cake made of eggs, flour and sugar. It is a mental creation in every detail, and the whole is of one spirit and act" (Wellek 1955, 1:209).

Although the Sturm und Drang movement and the later interest in the idea of creative genius were primarily literary phenomena, musical life in 1770s Berlin also reflected the concerns with artistic greatness and with the artistic embodiment of emotional life. Music at court had changed little since the 1750s. Two of the principal musicians there, J. Friedrich Agricola and J. Philipp Kirnberger, had been pupils of J. S. Bach, whose works, along with Handel's, were enthusiastically promoted by Frederick the Great's sister Anna Amalia and by Wilhelm Friedemann Bach and Friedrich Marpurg (C. P. E. Bach had left Berlin for Hamburg in 1768). During his residence in Berlin, van Swieten joined the circle around Marpurg and Kirnberger and became acquainted with J. S. Bach's keyboard music and Handel's oratorios. The baron also helped to promote C. P. E. Bach's music internationally by introducing it to the music publisher Artaria in Vienna. Also during the 1770s, the *Phantasie* or expressive, free-form genre was cultivated in northern Germany. The *Phantasie* was a "private" genre and, as a vehicle for personal and emotional expression, foreign to Viennese music culture during these years. This very different flavor of north German musical culture was conveyed by Dr. Burney, who, visiting Berlin in the 1760s, described an encounter with Emanuel Bach:

> After dinner, which was elegantly served and cheerfully eaten, I prevailed upon him to sit down again to a clavichord, and he played with little intermission, till near eleven o'clock at night. During this time, he grew so animated and *possessed*, that he not only played, but looked like one inspired. His eyes were fixed, his under lip fell, and drops of effervescence distilled from his countenance. (1775, 126)

Anecdotal evidence concerning Beethoven's own reception in Berlin in the mid-1790s suggests that this more emotional approach to music had persisted. When Beethoven visited Berlin in 1796, his audience sobbed after his extemporaneous piano performances, a response that, according to Carl Czerny (cited in Thayer and Forbes 1967, 1:185), made him adverse to King Frederick Wilhelm's reputed invitation to stay on as a court musician (possibly as Johann Friedrich Reichardt's replacement). A. W. Thayer reports in another version of this story that Beethoven supposedly observed to an acquaintance in 1810 that his Berlin audience

had not applauded but crowded around him and wept, which was "not what we artists wish—we want applause!" (ibid., 187).

During his seven years in Berlin, then, van Swieten was exposed to a quite different conception of music's role in social life and, more broadly, to aesthetics that emphasized the notions of creative genius and original creation, an approach he later propagated on Viennese soil. Back in Vienna by 1777 and occupied with Josephian reform, the baron cultivated music perhaps more earnestly than any other Viennese aristocrat. By the 1790s he occupied the position of, as Olleson (1963, 73) has put it, "high priest of musical taste—a position impregnable after the success of [Haydn's] Creation and [Haydn's] Seasons" (the mid to late 1790s). When Johann Ferdinand von Schönfeld (a music publisher and ennobled businessman) produced a who's who of music in 1796, the *Jahrbuch der Tonkünst von Wien und Prag,* he described van Swieten in effusive terms. The baron is,

> as it were, looked upon as a patriarch of music. He has taste only for the great and exalted. He himself many years ago composed twelve beautiful symphonies. When he attends a concert our semi-connoisseurs never take their eyes off him, seeking to read in his features, not always intelligible to every one what ought to be their opinion of the music. Every year he gives a few large and brilliant concerts at which only music by the old masters is performed. His preference is for the Handelian manner and he generally has some of Handel's great choruses performed. (trans. Thayer and Forbes 1967, 1:157)

The oratorios to which Schönfeld referred were produced by what was probably Vienna's earliest concert organization, the Gesellschaft der Associierten Cavaliere (GAC), or associated knights, which van Swieten founded in 1786 and for which he acted as director. This association was devoted to the private performances of oratorios, mainly by Handel and Haydn, which usually were held at Prince Josef Schwarzenberg's palace. (Each time his works were performed, Haydn received a generous donation from the association.) If a performance was successful, the society then arranged for a second concert, this time open to the public. The GAC was active well into the 1800s, growing gradually more powerful as it took over the direction of three of Vienna's most important public concert venues.

Van Swieten was apparently a formal man; he wrote several symphonies described by Schönfeld as "beautiful," but which Haydn said were "stiff as himself" (that is, as van Swieten) (Olleson 1967). Perhaps somewhat pompously, van Swieten offered the following self-portrait in the first volume of the *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung:*

> I belong, as far as music is concerned, to a generation that considered it necessary to study an art form thoroughly and systematically before attempting to practice it. I find in such a conviction food for the spirit and for the heart, and I return to it for strength every time I am oppressed by new evidence of decadence in the arts. My principal comforters at such times are Handel and the Bachs and those few great men of our own day who, taking these as their masters, follow resolutely in the same quest for greatness and truth. (A. Schindler 1966, 49)

The fact that Haydn nevertheless collaborated with van Swieten and that he was willing to submit his own compositions, as had Mozart before him, to van Swieten for artistic advice is further testimony to the baron's power in musical affairs.[9] Van Swieten even persuaded Haydn (against his better judgment) to include the imitation of frogs in *The Seasons*—which Haydn subsequently had removed from the later piano transcription. Haydn wrote to August Müller, who was arranging the score: "This entire passage in imitation of a frog did not flow from my pen. I was constrained to write down the French croak. At an orchestral performance this wretched conceit soon disappears, but it cannot be justified in a pianoforte score" (Thayer and Forbes 1967, 1:157–58). As for the process of composing *The Creation,* Franz Grillparzer, the Austrian poet and playwright, said that the baron "had each piece, as soon as it was ready, copied and prerehearsed with a small orchestra. *Much he discarded as too trivial for the grand subject*" (Landon 1976–80, 4: 353; emphasis added).

During the 1780s, van Swieten's preoccupation with musical "greatness and truth" was not always shared by Viennese aristocrats, an indication of some of the obstacles that Beethoven's successful reception faced. To Count Zinzendorf, for example, van Swieten may have seemed too much of a connoisseur—at least there is one diary entry to suggest this may have been the case ("de l'ennui, et Swieten") (Olleson 1967, 225).[10] Olleson observes that contemporary references to van Swieten were often not flattering: he was viewed by some members of Viennese society as "aloof, pedantic and preachy" (ibid., 41). Nonetheless, he had his disciples. The young Prince Karl Lichnowsky, for example, was a regular guest at van Swieten's Sunday morning concerts. It is worth noting that Lichnowsky, like van Swieten, was familiar with Berlin since he was required to visit the Prussian court regularly.

With his earnest enthusiasm for "serious" music, van Swieten was a key figure in promoting a canonic ideology of music in Vienna during the 1780s and 1790s. His contemporaries regarded him as a pioneer of

new conventions of music consumption in the concert hall, and his attempts prefigure patterns of regulating audiences that were later disseminated and institutionalized.[11] Otto Jahn reports that, according to the composer Sigismund Neukomm, van Swieten

> exerted all his influence in the cause of music, even for so subordinate an end as to enforce silence and attention during musical performances. Whenever a whispered conversation arose among the audience, his excellence would rise from his seat in the first row, draw himself up to his full majestic height, measure the offenders with a long, serious look and then very slowly resume his seat. The proceeding never failed of its effect. (1882, 2:385)

The taste for "great" music became more central over the course of the 1790s, and it seems clear that this taste was promoted by Baron van Swieten. So far, I have documented this cultural development through anecdotes and reports from contemporary observers and music writers. While these sources are invaluable for their illustrations of the emerging culture of musical seriousness, they are less helpful in clarifying the ways musical predilections were socially distributed during this time. They show that the taste for serious music was cultivated by Baron van Swieten, but not how far such taste extended outside the bounds of aristocratic music consumption.

THE VIENNESE PUBLIC CONCERT REPERTORY, 1780–1810

For information on the social boundaries of the taste for serious music and Beethoven, it is necessary to turn to repertory data and in particular to the public concert world of subscription and benefit concerts. In comparison with the private realm of salons (and with public music worlds elsewhere) this arena was relatively small. Nonetheless, examination of it provides some of the clearest indications of how the serious music ideology was confined initially to Vienna's social elites.

There are at least four reasons for attempting to locate the boundaries of the new ideology through an examination of public as opposed to private concert repertories.[12] First, the numbers of both public concerts and concert locations rose steadily after around 1795 (see Figure 1). Second, because public concerts were, in theory, more accessible to middle-class patrons, they represent the musical activity of a broader sector of Vienna's population. The custom of hosting private concerts did begin to trickle down the social scale during the 1780s and 1790s, but for most

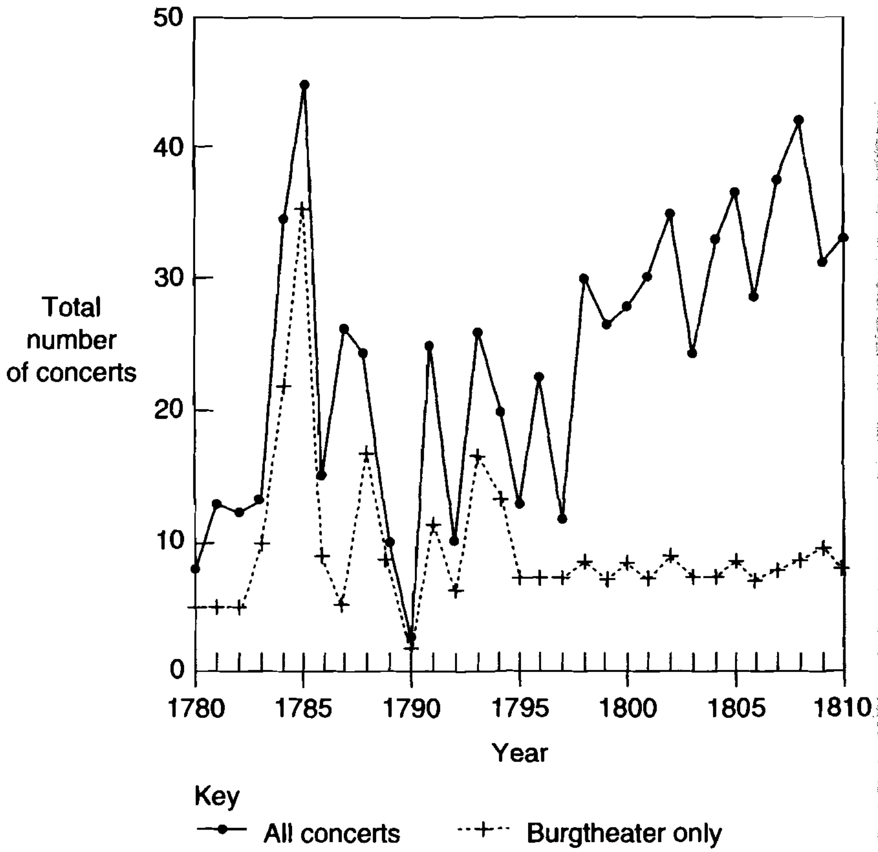


Figure 1. The rise in known public concerts and the decreasing proportion of known concerts at the most important of the court-controlled concert locations (Morrow 1989).

bourgeois in Vienna, the prospect of hosting private salons on a regular basis was—unless one was a musician or could count musicians as acquaintances—financially prohibitive. Even for someone like the civil servant Carl Rosenbaum, who had befriended Haydn and whose wife was a professional singer, a salon was an occasion both costly and (because he and his wife had to do much of the preparation for it themselves) time consuming (Rosenbaum 1968). A ticket or subscription to a concert or series, on the other hand, provided a more realistic alternative. Third, public concerts were at least occasionally used by aristocrats as showcases for composers or performances that had already been premiered privately, a practice to which the circumstances of many Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven premiers attest. These public concerts, sponsored or organized by aristocrats, communicated the current trends in the world of the private aristocratic salons. Finally (and more practically), there is not enough specific information available on private concert programs (the salons), where composers and works often remain unidentifiable. Indeed, the private concert was a less purposive event—music making in private was entwined with many other social activities, to the extent that the boundaries of what would count as a private concert, in the modern sense, were far from clear. Moreover, because record keeping of public concert programs was often systematic, a greater proportion of extant public concert programs have survived.

The most comprehensive compilation of data on public concert repertories is the one assembled by Morrow (1989) and recently updated and corrected by Edge (1992). Both scholars have helped to reconstruct a public concert calendar, Morrow's for the years 1763 to 1810 (as well as a less detailed private concert calendar for 1761 to 1810) and Edge's for 1780 to 1800. In both calendars data are presented in raw form, by concert and in chronological order, providing a rich source of information for scholars of Viennese musical life. When analyzed, the calendars shed further light on two aspects of the changing ideology of late eighteenth-century musical life. First, they indicate that, with the decline of the hauskapellen or private house orchestras (see chapter 3), attention within the repertory was concentrated on musical stars (Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven), who were programmed at the expense of most other occupational composers. Second, when the celebration of these composers is explored according to concert location, Morrow's data indicate that the emergence during the 1800s of the taste for explicitly serious music—formal complexity, the so-called higher genre, and a more strict and purposive mode of music reception—emerged primarily among Vienna's elite aristocratic patrons and was clearly not a part of middle-class musical life.

When examined in the context of all public concerts offered in Vienna between 1791 and 1810, Mozart's compositions, along with those of Haydn and Beethoven, occupied a special place in Viennese concert life. Performances of works by these composers were sustained over nearly the whole of this twenty-year period and at a level of intensity higher than for that of any of their contemporaries.[13] These composers can be understood as musical "stars" in the sense that they occupied an exceptional amount of space within the Viennese public concert repertory as a whole; their works occupied a dominant position in the Viennese concert world and signified a growing concentration of attention on musical

celebrities (confirming what Morrow [1989] and other scholars have already suggested; see also Moore 1987 and W. Weber 1977, 1984a, 1986).

It would be inappropriate to suggest on the basis of this finding, however, that the works of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven were programmed universally across concert locations or that they were all performed with any regular degree of intensity throughout this twenty-year period. On closer inspection, it becomes clear that performances of their works were not randomly distributed, either (in the case of Beethoven) over time, or (in the case of all three) across concert locations. Further qualifying the finding of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven as musical stars, therefore, illuminates the social distribution of musical taste in Vienna at this time: explicitly "serious" music was associated primarily with Vienna's old aristocrats but not with the middle class.

The total number of performances of Beethoven's works, for instance, is somewhat misleading, because the distribution of Beethoven's performances was uneven. Thirty-two of the eighty-odd performances of Beethoven's music occurred in 1808 (see Table 3).[14] Moreover, while performances of Haydn and Mozart were more evenly distributed across the twenty-year period, public performances of Beethoven increased after 1800 and were boosted still more in 1808. It is worth inquiring into the circumstances under which the increasing presence of Beethoven in the public concert repertory occurred, and for this it is necessary to examine the distribution of composers' performances according to concert location and, therefore, according to social group.

The 1808 surge in Beethoven performances consisted of five all-Beethoven concerts produced as part of the Liebhaber series (held at the Universitätssaal), the two all-Beethoven concerts that took place at the Theater an der Wien, an all-Beethoven concert held in the Kleine Redoutensaal, and through incidental performances of Beethoven at the Burgtheater.[15] Concerts at all these locations were organized, at this time, by Vienna's old aristocrats. At the Burgtheater, a predominantly aristocratic theater, princes and counts subscribed to boxes, barons and new aristocrats occupied the partier, and intellectuals and lackeys sat up in the gods (O. Schindler 1976; Edge 1991); all subscriptions were dispensed with for special occasion charity performances. Administration of the Burgtheater was taken over by the GAC (the organization van Swieten directed) in 1807, as was that of the Redoutensaal. Tickets for the Liebhaber concerts at the Universitätssaal were distributed by the seventy GAC members to "a carefully chosen audience of subscribers" (Morrow

TABLE 3
PERFORMANCES OF WORKS BY VIENNA'S MOST FREQUENTLY PERFORMED COMPOSERS, 1791–1810

Year	Haydn	Mozart	Beethoven	Par	Weigl	Cimarosa
1791	5	5	0	0	1	0
1792	3	1	0	0	2	1
1793	10	1	0	0	2	0
1794	3	4	0	0	0	0
1795	4	3	3	0	0	4
1796	12	0	1	0	0	0
1797	1	6	3	0	0	2
1798	11	9	4	0	2	2
1799	9	1	0	0	1	0
1800	13	7	5	4	1	0
1801	14	5	3	0	3	3
1802	9	3	3	12	0	7
1803	5	3	7	4	1	0
1804	4	8	5	5	0	2
1805	16	11	4	3	1	2
1806	3	7	3	9	0	0
1807	7	4	7	2	0	0
1808	5	2	32	2	0	0
1809	8	4	3	2	15	0
1810	4	5	5	4	1	2
Total	146	89	88	47	30	25

Source: Morrow 1989, 238–364.

1989, 62–63)—none were sold to the public. The Theater an der Wien was taken over in 1806 by the GAC. Throughout its irregular existence between 1786 and 1808, the GAC was exclusively aristocratic.[16]

How, meanwhile, did Beethoven fare with middle-class audiences? While none of Vienna's theaters could be classified as entirely middle class, since aristocrats could and sometimes did attend them,[17] the most distinctly middle class of Vienna's concert locations at this time was the Leopoldstadt theater, located in Vienna's suburbs. Ticket prices there were consistently lower than those for similar seats at the court-sponsored Burgtheater or at the Theater an der Wien (Morrow 1989, 131–35). There is no information on Universitätssaal concert ticket prices. Judging from the programs listed in Morrow's public concert calendar, Beethoven was never performed at the Leopoldstadt theater.[18] Although the Leopoldstadt repertory did partially overlap with repertories of other concert locations (see Table 4), the shared music, apart from

TABLE 4
COMPOSERS' FIRST AND LAST APPEARANCES IN MORROW'S PUBLIC CONCERT CALENDAR, BY CONCERT LOCATION, 1791–1810[a]

	Location			
	Jahn's	Leopoldstadt	Wien	Universitätssaal
Composers held in common by:				
All locations				
Haydn	1798–	1800–	1791–	1807–8
Mozart	1791–	1804–	1791–	1807–8
Cherubini	1806–	1810	1804	1807
J, L, W				
Sarti	1797	1795	1801	
Cimarosa	1795–1802	1795–1804	1792	
Paisiello	1795–1802	1808	1798	
J, W, U				
Beethoven	1797–		1798–	1807–8
L, W, U				
none				
J, L, U				
none				
J, W				
Pleyel	1804–5		1791, 1809	
Hummel	1805		1806	
Kreutzer	1805		1806	
L, W				
Anfossi		1795	1798	
Righini		1801	1798	
Süssmayr		1810	1805–9	
Clement		1810	1805–9	
J, L				
Martini		1802	1801	
L, U				
none				
J, U				
none				
W, U				
none				

Source: Morrow 1989, 238–364.
[a]Listing only those composers who performed at two or more of the following locations: J, Jahn's restaurant; L, Leopoldstadt Theater; U, Universitätssaal; W, Theater an der Wien; concerts at the Universitätssaal took place in 1807 and 1808 only.

Haydn, Mozart, and Cherubini, was generally that of the older-style Italian composers (Domenico Cimarosa, Vincenzo Righini, Giovanni Paisiello), two of whom continued to be performed at the middle-class theater after they were dropped from the Theater an der Wien. Luigi Cherubini, who was hailed as a "new-style," serious composer, appeared on Leopoldstadt programs later than at the Theater an der Wien. While the middle-class, suburban theater was more conservative with respect to the "aristocratic" composers it performed, it was also known for presenting spectacular programmatic show pieces, such as the battle symphonies of Ferdinand Kauer and the occasionally bizarre antics of the Bohdanowicz family (see Morrow 1989 for details). The Leopoldstadt theater's kapellmeister was Wenzel Müller, a composer of 272 light operettas. The taste for these composer-performers was not shared by the more aristocratic repertories, though the Bohdanowicz family was featured at one of the other more socially mixed concert locations, Jahn's restaurant. Although Beethoven was programmed at Jahn's, he appears on only three separate programs (in 1797, 1798, and 1806) and was not part of the staple repertory, which consisted of Cimarosa, Eberl, and Pleyel. (The last recorded performance of music at Jahn's occurred in 1806 [Morrow 1989].)

Haydn and Mozart were, of course, programmed at the Leopoldstadt theater and Jahn's. Indeed, they appear as "most often programmed" composers at these venues as well as at the Theater an der Wien and the Universitätssaal (see Table 5). It would be wrong to conclude, however, that the taste for "serious" music was distributed evenly across social groups simply because compositions by Haydn and Mozart appeared at all concert locations. A look at the particular works by Mozart and Haydn performed at each location (see Table 6) reveals that the type of composition featured varied from place to place, and this is especially the case with Mozart. Genres which from our twentieth-century preconceptions and stereotypes we characterize as lighter (that is, shorter pieces, or more overtly virtuosic pieces, songs, arias, and overtures) appeared primarily at the Leopoldstadt theater, while the GAC-controlled Theater an der Wien and the Liebhaber-Universitätssaal concerts featured symphonies, cantatas, unstaged versions of opera, and Mozart's *Requiem* instead of (or in addition to) the genres offered at Leopoldstadt.[19]

Thus, while music by the star composers Haydn and Mozart was common to all of these concert locations, the ways Haydn and Mozart

TABLE 5

COMPOSERS MOST OFTEN LISTED AT FIVE MAJOR LOCATIONS, WITH NUMBER OF PERFORMANCES OF THEIR WORKS AND THE YEARS DURING WHICH THEY ARE LISTED FOR 1791–1810

Jahn's	Leopoldstadt	Wien	Universitätssaal	Burgtheater
Mozart (11), 1791–	Haydn (6), 1800–	Beethoven (22), 1798–	Beethoven (9), 1807–8	Haydn (79), 1791–
Eberl (6), 1804–5	Mozart (5), 1801–	Mozart (13), 1791–	Haydn (3), 1807–8	Par (23), 1800–8
Cimarosa (6), 1795–1802	Cimarosa (5), 1795–1804	Cherubini (12), 1804–		Mozart (22), 1791–
Haydn (5), 1798–	Müller (5), 1796–1808	Haydn (10), 1791–		Beethoven (20), 1795–
	Kauer (5), 1798–1809			Weigl (13), 1791–1807
				Mayer (12), 1802–8
				Paisiello (11), 1791–1804
				Eybler (11), 1794–1804
				Cherubini (11), 1805–
				Salieri (9), 1795–1809
				Auernhammer (8), 1795–1806
				Winter (8), 1796–1810
				Süssmayr (8), 1797–1809
				Handel (8), 1792–1807
				Cimarosa (8), 1793–1810

Source: Morrow 1989, 238–364.
Note: The Liebhaber concerts at the Universitätssaal featured, in addition to performances of Beethoven and Haydn, those of Mozart, Himmel, Cherubini, Rode, and Müller. These composers appeared on Liebhaber programs only once, at the first concert in the series; subsequent concerts were devoted to music of Beethoven and Haydn.

TABLE 6

MOZART PERFORMANCES BY LOCATION AND GENRE

	Wien	Jahn's	Leopoldstadt	Universitätssaal
Symphony	2	1		1
Cantata	3			
Opera	3			
Aria	3		2	
Concerto	1	4	1	
Variations	1			
Requiem	1	1		
Vocal trio	2			
Vocal quartet	1	1		
Overture		1	1	
Piano rondo		1		
Four-hand sonata			1	
Total	17	9	6	1

Source: Morrow 1989, 238–364.

were featured varied. The early 1800s version of Mozart, in which he is represented through his lighter works as programmed in the Leopoldstadt theater, more closely resembled a conception of the composer in keeping with that programmed at the Theater an der Wien in the 1780s and early 1790s—the specific works chosen reflected a "successful" and "popular" Mozart, as understood in his lifetime. This representation was also in keeping with the earlier and more universally shared taste for Italianate operatic music and the amateur-oriented aesthetic of "general taste" that aristocrats had begun to abandon during the 1790s. The public concert repertory indicates that Vienna's old aristocrats were closely linked to Vienna's three dominant composers during these years and further, that they were linked to conceptualizations of these composers which emphasized their seriousness.

It seems fair, then, to suggest that a serious music ideology, which took as its exemplars Beethoven and reconstituted, more explicitly "learned" and grandiose versions of Mozart and Haydn, emerged during the 1790s in Vienna, and that this ideology was primarily subscribed to by old aristocrats, not the middle class. This view runs counter to what Arnold Hauser (1962), Henry Raynor (1976), Theodor Adorno (1976), and a host of other scholars have had to say, on the basis of scant evidence, about the origins of serious music ideology, and, as such, it chal-

lenges received sociological wisdom and Beethoven mythology concerning the origin of the musical canon.

In recent years, several more detailed social historical studies of Viennese musical life have appeared (Hanson 1985; Morrow 1989; Moore 1987, n.d.b.; Freeman 1987; Edge 1991). The comparative picture they present suggests ever more strongly that, although musical life was certainly thriving elsewhere at this time (in terms of commercial organization and sheer numbers, London musical life was more advanced), it was in Vienna that the new model of musical seriousness based around Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven was initially formulated.

CHAPTER 3

Musical Patronage and Social Change

Writing about Austro-Hungarian musical life in the early 1780s, the German musician and traveler Johann Friedrich Reichardt (1915) says, "The court cultivates music passionately and the nobility have an inordinate love and knowledge of music." The motivations Reichardt attributed to these Viennese music patrons (and which subsequently became part of the folklore of music history and a resource for explaining their enthusiastic support of serious music ideology) may have been more flattering than accurate. Eighteenth-century music patronage was born of observance of convention, duty, fashion, and one-upmanship as often as it was of "inordinate love and knowledge." Nonetheless, it was undoubtedly through the efforts of the imperial court and the Viennese aristocrats that, from midcentury and well into the 1820s, Vienna was recognized as a major European music capital, if not for size then certainly for prestige. By 1792 (the year Beethoven arrived in Vienna) the city was at the height of its musical powers, though the social and institutional basis of its music world was undergoing profound change.

In brief, the history of high culture music patronage in eighteenth-century Vienna comprises (1) the rise and fall of the hofkapelle (imperial ensemble) under Karl VI and Maria Theresa, respectively, (2) the rise and fall of aristocratic hauskapellen (house ensembles), (3) the emergence of dilettante forums during the final quarter of the century, and (4) the emergence of freelance musicians and the earliest forms of the Viennese version of the public concert. In his history of Viennese concert life, the

nineteenth-century music critic Eduard Hanslick ([1869] 1979) referred to the whole of this phase (1750–1800) as the Patriarchal Era and to the thirty years that followed as the period of dilettante associations. While Hanslick was attempting to call attention to the general decline of private forms of music sponsorship and the subsequent diffusion of patronage to which that decline gave rise, he did not intend to imply that the end of the patriarchal period was characterized by a decline in aristocratic participation in musical affairs. Indeed, he was fully aware that the Viennese aristocrats remained active and, for the most part, dominant in musical affairs well into the nineteenth century (far later than their Parisian or London counterparts), and he described the emergence of these aristocrats as Vienna's "most brilliant" early nineteenth-century dilettantes. In this respect, Hanslick's views tended to reflect the ways these aristocrats were perceived by their contemporary observers (for example, as reported in music periodicals; see Wallace 1986).

Subsequent scholars have tended to reject Hanslick's account and to propose an alternate conception of the relationship between institutional change and aristocratic authority. These reassessments, however, often compartmentalize "eighteenth-century" versus "nineteenth-century" musical life, because they exaggerate the participation and relative influence of the middle classes and underplay the continued importance of aristocratic authority. Nevertheless, these revisionist accounts attained mythical status among late nineteenth-century music scholars, for whom, as the historian William Weber puts it, the "jack-in-the-box" concept of the middle class has functioned as a "historical *deus ex machina*" (1979, 176).

Certainly this myth is nowhere more forceful than in discussions of the acceptance of Beethoven's idiosyncratic and alternative style (Crabbe 1982; Knight 1973). There Beethoven is portrayed as heroically overthrowing "eighteenth-century" aristocratic patronage conventions in order to address his nineteenth-century public more directly and "forcing" hesitant aristocratic patrons to accept this independence; alternately, the aristocrats who supported Beethoven are lauded for their heroic willingness to reject the aesthetic forms, which otherwise buttressed their social position, in favor of what they regarded as the intrinsic and "purely" musical "superiority" of Beethoven's work. As we have seen, Beethoven's fully fledged middle-class public had not yet appeared in the 1790s and early 1800s Vienna and, in fact, it did not emerge until well after his death. Moreover, while Beethoven did attempt to alter many of the conventions that characterized the eighteenth-century composer's relationship with his (aristocratic) patrons, the reasons for his actions are far more complex than such mythic accounts suggest.

Over the past few years, an alternative to the theory of the burgeoning middle-class and declining aristocracy has been proposed (Moore 1987; Morrow 1989). Perhaps because this more recent perspective was developed in response to the "aristocratic demise" theory, however, it has tended to overstate an opposing argument. Insofar as this new theory has focused on demonstrating how aristocrats in early nineteenth-century Vienna were no *less* dominant in music affairs than were their predecessors a quarter century before, it has tended to leave two important issues unexplored. First, this approach has not attempted to look for a potential, perceived, or symbolic (as opposed to statistical or quantitative) middle-class challenge to aristocratic authority. Second, it has tended to base its argument on a before-and-after view of aristocratic authority, following the logic that, because these patrons remained dominant, their position was never subject to challenge.

To what extent can the aristocratic embrace of the new ideology of "serious" music be understood (whether or not aristocrats consciously intended it as such) as helping to conserve aristocratic authority in the face of organizational change? And how serious was the middle-class "challenge" to aristocrats, both in terms of its material consequences (that is, what the new organizational structure facilitated and hindered) and in terms of how it may have been perceived at the time?

VIENNESE MUSIC PATRONAGE IN HISTORICAL CONTEXT

In a sense, Vienna's musical reign began with the accession of Ferdinand in 1619. By choosing Vienna as his primary residence, Ferdinand made it the de facto capital of the empire, which meant that it became one of the centers for hofkapelle performances (Antonicek 1980). As Theophil Antonicek has suggested, Ferdinand was responsible, both on his own and through his Italian wife, Eleonora Gonzaga, for forging the first important links between the Hapsburg court and musicians from Italy, an association that continued for nearly two centuries. In addition, by advocating Baroque rather than Renaissance music ideals (that is, the Italian *stile moderno*—monody plus basso continuo—as opposed to the northern European polyphonic style), Ferdinand helped to dispel the imperial court's sixteenth-century image as the embodiment of musical conservatism (ibid., 716).

It was with Ferdinand that the age of courtly magnificence was ushered in. During the next hundred years, under the emperors Leopold I, Joseph I, and Charles VI, the hofkapelle grew steadily and by 1705 it numbered 107 members; between 1723 and 1740, it swelled to 134 (Moore 1987, 98). In 1746, however, Maria Theresa checked any further growth by dividing the imperial kapelle into two organizations—the hofoper (imperial opera) and the hofkapelle (responsible for all other music production)—and this split led to the decline of the latter organization, which took on a "second-class" status (ibid., 99). By 1822, the hofkapelle was composed of only 20 musicians, most of whom were pensioners (ibid.).

Why so much money was poured into the hofkapelle during the seventeenth century is a fascinating question but beyond the scope of this study. Relevant here is why these funds were curtailed during the eighteenth century and the effect this reduction had on aristocratic musical life. It was not merely coincidental that the rise and fall of the hofkapelle preceded and overlapped with the rise and fall of the aristocratic hauskapellen. These ensembles, especially the smaller and more remote ones,[1] were often composed of musically talented domestic servants who performed double duty (see Mahling 1985; Moore 1987; Morrow 1989). The "heyday," as Hanslick calls it, of these ensembles occurred between 1750 and 1775.[2] By the time Beethoven entered the Viennese music world in 1792, hauskapellen were already a thing of the past. As Schönfeld notes in his 1796 *Jahrbuch*:

> It was formerly a strong custom that our great princely houses maintained their own house orchestras, at which they cultivated the leading spirits (*genie*) of music. Such was the case with Haydn. Only, it is now barren for art lovers, whether for a lessening of a love of music or for want of taste, frugality or for some other cause; in short, to the detriment of music, this worthy custom has been lost—one house orchestra lost after another, so that, apart from Prince Schwarzenberg, perhaps no more exist. (77)

HAUSKAPELLEN AND HOFKAPELLE: RISE AND FALL

So far, two explanations have been offered for the rise of hauskapellen. The most common is the one to which Reichardt alluded—that the Viennese nobility simply had a "love and knowledge" of music. More recently, an additional explanation has been proposed by Moore (1987). Following the social and economic historian Hannes Stekl (1975), Moore argues that the increasing popularity of kapellen was driven as much by aristocratic observance of convention and status-consciousness as by interest in music for its own sake. Aristocrats, in order to conform to their role expectations, maintained ensembles commensurate to their financial means and station. As Stekl notes, "Artists and the public also expected a well-off aristocrat to assume the role of a generous patron, informed collector, appreciative friend of music and painting. Numerous examples of this have been cited by Heinz Gollwitzer" (trans. Moore 1987, 91).

The rise of the hauskapellen, Moore argues, can be best viewed as a kind of fad or fashion in which first the upper nobility and later other aristocrats, major and minor, followed the example set at court. If one was familiar with behavior at court, one could demonstrate one's proximity to the court (and therefore one's status) by imitation. Music, then, was a vehicle (in Vienna, perhaps the most important vehicle, given its conspicuous and social nature) through which one could demonstrate, gain, and even, presumably, lose status; it was a primary medium for the registration of prestige. One could argue that these aristocrats did not need status—ranking at court was based on heredity. Unlike many twentieth-century aristocrats, these hereditary princes already had status. To take such a position, however, is to look at the problem through nonaristocratic lenses. Outside court, ranking was based on cultural consumption and money as well as lineage.

During the middle eighteenth century, the intended audience for aristocratic lavishness was only secondarily the public at large, most of whom, as today, would not be well enough versed in the practices and fashions of the aristocratic subculture to distinguish and appreciate their myriad up-to-the-minute displays. Conspicuous musical consumption, therefore, was not primarily for the benefit of social inferiors; instead, cultural displays were oriented upward and sideways, to those audiences that the patrons wished to imitate or be aligned with, and to audiences they wished to compete with or impress. During the height of the hauskapellen activity, impressing middle-class or minor aristocratic audiences (and thereby distancing themselves from these audiences) was, for high-ranking aristocrats, a relatively minor concern. A letter, for example, from an eighteenth-century nobleman, Count von Sporck, illustrates the importance of these upward and sideways axes in locating one's status position. The count wrote to his friend Count Johann Wilhelm von Thurheim in 1724 and congratulated himself on his ability, as a mere count, to employ an opera company, while his neighbor, a prince, employed only a lutenist:

> I must confess indeed that I have a special fondness for delightful and agreeable music, but this is not the principal reason why I was induced to engage the [opera] company. Rather, after I learned that Princess Schwarzenberg was to take a cure only a mile from here on her husband's estate of Wildschutz . . . I hoped that the illustrious princess would remain in the vicinity for the entire summer. It was decided that the opera singers were to arrive here in the middle of June at the latest in order to entertain her with operas as well as comedies. (Freeman, quoted in Moore 1987, 95)

The enterprise of music patronage was socially loaded, and those who took part in it did so for a variety of intertwined reasons. If we assume that ideals or goals are frequently articulated with reference to more immediate interests, situations, and available means (Berger 1981; Swidler 1986), it is reasonable to suggest four factors that were, at least in part, responsible for the rise of the hauskapellen: first, that higher aristocrats were interested in imitating the imperial court; second, that lower aristocrats were interested in imitating and thereby rubbing shoulders with the upper aristocrats; third, that the practice became conventional and expected as the century progressed; and fourth, that some aristocrats would have found musical activity to be of intrinsic interest, but that interest in and love of music by no means provided the only impetus for music patronage. This multifactor explanation also serves us better when we address the issue of the late eighteenth-century demise of the hauskapellen, especially when we evaluate the various explanations that have been offered for this decline. If the primary motivating factor for the proliferation of hauskapellen was love of music, then it is difficult to explain why by 1796, as Schönfeld observed, nearly all of these ensembles had been disbanded. Was the cause "less of a love for music"—one of the possible explanations Schönfeld suggested? In that case one would expect aristocrats to abandon musical life altogether, which clearly did not occur. What was rejected, in other words, was not musical life itself, but rather its previous social organization. As Morrow observes, "The change did not signify the end of aristocratic patronage of music or the disappearance of music-making in the home. . . . The custom remained the same; only the arrangement was different" (1989, 1–2).

At this point, it is necessary to consider the other and still dominant view of why the hauskapellen were disbanded at the end of the century, for it too is congruent with the "love and knowledge" theory of their initial rise. This theory suggests that the downfall of the hauskapellen reflected a corresponding downfall of the aristocracy, an idea espoused (but never sufficiently explicated) in Deutsch 1965, Hellyer 1980, Raynor 1976, Loesser 1954, Solomon 1977a, and Hanson 1985. In brief, these scholars have suggested that aristocratic fortunes were lost or significantly reduced during the later eighteenth century, causing the nobility to turn to more diffuse and socially less exclusive forms of patronage, whereby musicians were engaged on an event-by-event basis as opposed to being kept as full-time members of the domestic staff. Thus economic downfall of the aristocracy is posited as the factor that led to the rise of the public concert and to middle-class dominance in musical affairs.

The hypothesis of an impoverished aristocracy is attractive to scholars attempting to explain not only the decline of the hauskapellen, but also the rise of the larger, more public instrumental musical forms. The idea is that this change led to the "emancipation" of musicians, in that it allowed them to speak directly to a rather anonymous public, and, unencumbered by the constraints imposed by "polite" aristocratic life and their previous role as servants, to produce works of unprecedented complexity and seriousness. Any space cleared for full middle-class participation of concert life, however, was not occupied immediately; the public—that is, the middle classes—did not take control of musical life until much later, if at all, and certainly not before the middle of the nineteenth century. Indeed, Thayer (1967, 1:154) suggests that "out of London, even so late as 1793, there can hardly be said to have existed a 'musical public,' as the term is now understood, and in Vienna at least, with its 200,000 inhabitants, a virtuoso rarely ventured to announce a concert to which he had not already a subscription, sufficient to ensure him against loss, from those at whose residences he had successfully exhibited his skill."[3] But most important, the suggestion that the aristocracy declined economically does not square with the revelations of more recent economic history. Moore (1987, 79–86) has shown that there is no convincing evidence in favor of the hypothesis that the aristocrats lost their fortunes at the end of the eighteenth century, that is, at the time during which kapellen were being disbanded. The economic decline of Vienna's oldest aristocrats that occurs well after 1800[4] can hardly have been the cause of the decline of the hauskapellen. According to Schönfeld, the decline of house ensembles was nearly complete by 1796. Later, it is true, there is more evidence for the hypothesis that landed aristocrats suffered from the effect of Viennese hyperinflation. But in the case of one

early nineteenth-century bankruptcy, that of Beethoven's patron Prince Joseph Lobkowitz, it appears that his misfortune was caused mostly by spending on a scale more lavish than his predecessors.[5] It has been argued, however, that even during the early 1800s aristocrats were better off economically than many of their capitalist counterparts, especially after 1809 when the effects of hyperinflation drastically reduced those fortunes not invested in real property (Moore 1987, 82).

Moore has proposed, as an alternative, that the decline of hauskapellen, like their earlier rise, can be understood as a fashion and further, that both rise and decline must be seen in the context of the rise and fall of the imperial hofkapelle. By recognizing the whole kapelle enterprise as a status-conscious endeavor, Moore has suggested, we can understand the rise of the hauskapellen as a response to the court's cultivation of such an ensemble. Correspondingly, the court's subsequent discontinuation of the hofkapelle when it was no longer more lavish than the ensembles of the highest aristocrats followed the principle that "a particular source of prestige, when adopted by a given social class quickly lost its prestige among the next higher social class" (Moore 1987, 100). The court thus became less interested in supporting its kapelle when it could no longer so dramatically outshine those of the aristocrats, and the nobility responded by losing interest in maintaining a practice with which the court was no longer engaged.

As hauskapellen became fashionable, they were imitated by lower aristocrats who, if unable to sponsor orchestral musicians and singers, sponsored *Harmonien* (wind bands) instead. By the 1780s (when the decline of hauskapellen was well under way) these wind ensembles were relatively common, including among the minor aristocracy. There were by then two good reasons for a status-conscious aristocrat to disband his or her hauskapelle: the court had withdrawn from the competition, and the support of a kapelle was no longer an uncommon, and therefore distinctive, practice. Though the higher aristocrats could have distinguished themselves from lower aristocrats through even more ostentatious kapellen—a full kapelle was certainly more magnificent than a wind band—once the court had dropped out of this rivalry, the major reason for having a kapelle in the first place was lost. By discontinuing a custom that was no longer socially useful and by maintaining an active interest in patronage of music through the newer dilettante salon forums, high aristocratic music patrons paved the way (albeit unwittingly) for increasingly broad participation in music affairs.

THE RISE OF SALON FORUMS AND THEIR SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Needless to say, conclusions about the fundamental transformation of the organizational basis of musical life in Vienna remain tentative. When we consider, for instance, the documentary materials available to scholars in some other areas, the evidentiary basis remains comparatively scant. The resources for the study of the years after 1800 (the Vienna of middle-period Beethoven and of Schubert) and before 1790 (before Mozart's death) are more extensive, and these periods have received far more attention from scholars than have the years between 1790 and 1800. Any inferences drawn, therefore, must remain tentative, but on the basis of the evidence that proponents of these theories have marshalled, the conclusion that "nowhere did the aristocracy come tumbling down" (Moore 1987, 47) seems the stronger of the two (other theories could be proposed, such as frugality on the part of aristocrats even if not genuine hardship). It does seem fairly certain that music was a primary medium for acquiring and demonstrating prestige and that the importance of this medium, once participation in music affairs began to broaden socially, was only intensified. Admittedly, the court's withdrawal from instrumental musical support effectively diminished the relevance of attempts on the part of the higher aristocrats to symbolically usurp the court's position as the most lavish of music patrons. Simultaneously, however, the lower aristocratic and upper middle-class entry into musical life necessitated an increasing emphasis on musical forms of exclusion if aristocrats were to remain distinct as musical leaders. The new social organization of musical life posed fresh problems for music's traditional and previously exclusive patrons—Vienna's old aristocrats—by affecting the conditions under which music could be useful in delineating status.

As we have seen, aristocrats continued their involvement in musical affairs after the decline of the hauskapellen. They supported music through events such as salons, after-dinner music, and party music (see Morrow 1989 for an excellent portrait of the private forms of high cultural Viennese musical life of this time), as well as larger performances such as the oratorios produced by van Swieten's GAC. On the surface, this newer, more diffuse form of patronage organization (of which the GAC was an example) appeared to be compatible with the old form of musical life because the events were controlled by old aristocrats and remained, for the most part, private affairs. In comparison with the older

organizational structure at its height (the aristocratic sponsorship of permanent domestic ensembles), however, the newer patronage structure did not provide a similar foundation for continued aristocratic distinction and, as the century waned, it gave rise to some changes.

First, the new organizational base was conducive to an increase in independent musicians, most of whom remained dependent on teaching (especially of the piano) as their primary source of income (Morrow 1989; Loesser 1954; M. Weber 1978; Moore 1987). Teaching was important as a way of earning a living (some teachers were paid with room and/or board instead of money) since there were many aspiring dilettantes but not yet much scope for entrepreneurial concert activity. This shift from hauskapellen to dilettante forums facilitated the rise of the "emancipated" musician (Salmen 1985; Mahling 1985), though the change was much more gradual than the "aristocratic demise" theorists have suggested and, in fact, it had more to do with the organizational basis of patronage than with the independent rise of the middle class. In addition, the status of some musicians began to rise as they began the slow transition from servants to autonomous professionals; nineteenth-century kapellen, where they did occur, tended to be composed of professional musicians rather than servants and were as a result more expensive to keep (Moore 1987, 105).

A second change engendered by the new organizational base of patronage was an increase in the number of public concerts (as discussed in chapter 2) and increased participation by the upper middle class and "second society" (ennobled members of the upper middle class) in privately sponsored music affairs. Now, with less of an economic barrier to music participation, those who would not have been able to keep any form of kapelle (not even the *Harmonie,* the poor man's kapelle) could engage in musical life by purchasing a subscription ticket or by hosting or attending a private concert. A cursory examination of Schönfeld's 1796 list of music world participants shows that about 30 percent were middle-class amateur musicians or salon hosts.[6]

Thus the aristocrats who at one time would have been exclusive music patrons now shared or—and this may have been equally important—risked sharing patronage rights over musicians with not only minor aristocrats and new aristocrats, but also members of the middle class. While most middle-class participation occurred in public (for the simple economic reason that private music sponsorship, even on a by-event basis, was expensive), some members of the middle class also sponsored their own salons, as Morrow observes:

> The practice of giving formal private concerts in the home began to trickle down the social scale, with the lower nobility and the wealthy middle class assuming an increasingly active role. By the end of the century, the musical salon had become firmly entrenched in the Viennese cultural world, so that all segments of the population who had the means to participate in the city's cultural life at all could have had access to at least one or two musical coteries. (1989, 2)

THE EXTENT AND QUALITY OF MIDDLE-CLASS PARTICIPATION

The foregoing discussion leads to the question currently debated by music historians studying this period: To what extent did this additional participation constitute a significant challenge to aristocratic leadership in music affairs? The most recent research has suggested that, in light of the evidence, the actual participation and power of the middle class and second society in musical affairs at the end of the eighteenth century was still relatively insignificant. The private concerts of the old aristocracy, the new aristocracy, and the middle class appear to have been carried on separately but in parallel. The second aristocracy, though they could frequently compete with the old aristocracy in monetary terms, were only rarely admitted to the latter's inner circles (Moore 1987, 61; Matis 1967). Moreover, though some members of the middle class were present at aristocratic salons, it is necessary, as Morrow points out, to

> distinguish between the association of bourgeois and aristocrats as performers and their relationship as members of the audience or as a social group. Musicians had been playing beside their noble employers for centuries without doing any damage to the class system, so that the collaboration in performance does not necessarily signal social change. A mixing of classes on the side of the audience would be a much better indication that a process of democratization was occurring, for though aristocrats necessarily had to associate with middle-class musicians in performance (on whatever basis), they were in no way obliged to fraternize with bourgeois music lovers by inviting them to concerts or by attending concerts in humbler homes. Whether or not they chose to do so is a difficult question to answer, but the diaries of two people who consistently attended concerts—the nobleman and socialite Count Karl von Zinzendorf and the middle-class accountant Joseph Carl Rosenbaum—indicate that the social boundaries were maintained in the various salons. (1989, 24)

Thus, to some extent, it is meaningful to speak of a social distribution of personnel, which suggests that middle-class participants and aristocrats were not on equal footing, even when participating in the same events.

Furthermore, the middle class was at this time relatively disparate and, as William Weber (1978) has observed, it is problematic to consider it a class at all. Those participants from the middle class and especially those who attended salons were members of the upper middle class, such as wholesale merchants, bankers, and higher government bureaucrats. According to Moore's calculations, contradicting Deutsch's statement that "there was a piano in every household" at this time (1965, xv), only members of the old aristocracy, the second aristocracy, and the rich bankers would have been able to purchase a piano with financial ease. Most middle-class aficionados were not rich enough to participate regularly in musical life (see Moore 1987, chap. 1; Morrow 1989, 2).

These recent studies have demonstrated that the democratization of musical life occurred gradually, and that, for the most part, the salons were not instruments of social change but tended to mirror the structure of Viennese society. In this most recent view, aristocrats are depicted as the unchallenged leaders of musical life, in spite of the organizational changes that life had recently undergone, and the limited democratization of musical life is dismissed as relatively insignificant. On the surface, musical life remained essentially unchanged, though perhaps capable of offering to patrons more variety, insofar as they heard less of their personal house ensemble and house composer's works. This view, however, misses one of the most sociologically interesting features of this period. Concluding that the salons were not instruments of social change overlooks the ways the salons (and the music ideology with which they were associated) were not merely neutral mirrors of social structure but also instruments of social stability.

THE CHANGING MEANING OF MUSICAL PATRONAGE

Although aristocratic leadership in music affairs remained constant, the substantive content of that leadership changed. The sources of distinction shifted from simple quantitative expenditure to qualitative demonstrations of discernment and "good taste" and to a heightened emphasis on the appreciation of "greatness," from which derived the notion of master composers. Praising Beethoven was simultaneously, albeit implicitly, praising his aristocratic patrons. Through the pursuit of the greatest composers (whose status depended on recognition by aristocratic, powerful patrons), Vienna's social aristocrats could themselves be identified as aristocrats of taste.

Because scholars have not yet made this music-ideological shift problematic in its own right, interest in the factors that could help to account for the shift has been negligible, and inquiry into the mechanisms for patronage distinction—specifically into the way these mechanisms gradually shifted—has been bypassed in favor of accounts celebrating the change. As Don Randel observes (1992, 11), canonic ideology is "in the musicological toolbox"—it is built in to the analytic strategies that music scholars employ. As a consequence, music scholarship often results in tautological confirmation of the canon's biased principles. Thus there are few tools for showing the extent to which the embrace of the new idea of musical greatness by some of Vienna's old aristocrats may have served as a proactive attempt to maintain status in the face of the loss of exclusive control over the traditional institutional means of authority in music affairs—a way of reconstituting their traditional social identity according to innovative cultural means.

To bring this aspect of aristocratic activity to light, it is necessary to distinguish more clearly between the short-term consequences and the potential long-term implications of the change in the organization of music sponsorship. Accordingly, we should attempt to assess the ways in which the nobility may have experienced these changes—how and to what extent they perceived these effects. So far, discussions of the sources and mechanisms for aristocratic distinction in Viennese musical life have remained theoretically vague. Music scholars have implicitly tended to conceive of aristocratic authority in its active cultural configuration rather than in terms of its structural underpinnings (that is, the institutional means according to which such cultural authority is maintained), and they have ignored the erosion of aristocratic control over the means of the production of musical life. Consequently, the short-term effects of the change have been conflated with the longer-term implications of the change in ways that preclude consideration of how the altered structure may have posed (and did pose) a potential threat to aristocratic authority over the long term.

The short-term social broadening that occurred was indeed limited. The potential long-term threat to aristocratic authority, however—the erosion of the institutional means for distinction—is clear: if, under the new system, distinction via patronage had continued to be constituted solely through quantitative participation, then the ability to achieve this distinction was deregulated to the extent that it was, in principle, opened to anyone who could afford to purchase a concert subscription or to host occasional private concerts. The musical means through which social exclusion could be achieved were being eroded. Incidentally, the dynamics

now permitted, at least in theory, the articulation of a professional rationale on the part of musicians.

There is no extant explicit testimony from the aristocrats themselves acknowledging that they perceived their traditional authority to be under threat (the closest example is van Swieten's references to musical "decadence"). But why should we expect there to be any? Moreover, even if this aristocratic enterprise were not strategic in its intent, the social consequences—the structuration of status groups—are not to be denied. To expect the nobility to declare or even to hold such an externalist view of their own situation may be to paint a far too rational portrait of aristocratic consciousness. At the same time, it is worth speculating on the cultural context of aristocratic sponsorship and asking how strategic this form of aristocratic aesthetic entrepreneurship was.

MUSICAL PATRONAGE AND CULTURAL CONTEXT

Late eighteenth-century Viennese society was rigidly hierarchical (Moore 1987, 58) and often perceived as "haughty" by foreign observers (Landon 1988, 24). Its members, especially the aristocrats, were keenly aware of social gradations, and even the most subtle violations of this hierarchy would have been registered by them. On the whole, the documentary evidence from a number of Viennese and foreign, aristocratic and middle-class observers supports this view. Reichardt, for example, emphasized in his observations on Vienna just how difficult it was for foreign nobility, even of very good houses, to penetrate the inner circle of this world (Landon 1988, 4). We have already seen the ways in which the structure of salons reproduced these social barriers. In criticizing Loesser's exaggerated twentieth-century report that "a piano could be found in every house in late eighteenth-century Vienna," Moore observes that "reports of drastic changes by contemporary observers should be evaluated carefully. In these rigidly hierarchical and traditional societies even quite small increases in size or influence of the middle classes tended to register disproportionally large shock waves among observers" (1987, 58). In other words, although Viennese social structure was not significantly altered during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, this "nonchange" occurred in a cultural climate hypersensitive to change.

Although the number of ennoblements rose during the second half of the eighteenth century,[7] the Viennese population grew at a higher rate. Moore has argued that this net decline of ennoblements in relation to the population at large would have made ennoblements appear less common (1987, 76), but her point is largely irrelevant in this discussion, since the old aristocrats would have been unlikely to have attended to how the growing number of new nobles actually represented a shrinking proportion of aristocrats to the general population. They were most likely to have registered how this growing number appeared in relation to themselves, in which case its significance would have been magnified. Scholars of the history of the Austrian aristocracy have observed that the old aristocrats were actively concerned with distancing themselves from their newly ennobled counterparts (Stekl 1978; Moore 1987). No matter how rich, most ennobled bankers—let alone members of the upper middle class—were still perceived as second-class aristocrats (Moore 1987, 83–84). More important, however, is that the mechanics of the new organizational base of music patronage made it possible for members of the second society and middle class to lead more or less the same sort of musical life as an aristocrat: they could patronize the same musicians and hear music by the same composers (albeit at different times and in different places) as long as they could afford to do so, which, increasingly during the 1790s, they could. They attended public concerts or sponsored private salons, either activity being considerably cheaper than supporting a kapelle. In view of the importance of musical sponsorship for the constitution of aristocratic identity, as evidenced in the discussion of the rise and fall of the hauskapellen, it becomes easier to appreciate that late eighteenth-century aristocrats risked being dispossessed of the primary means for maintaining their identity as leaders of cultural life. Given that it was during this period that aristocratic musical life began to be characterized by the concern for serious music, it is plausible that at least some of Vienna's old aristocrats were conscious of the implications of the change and that their interest and enthusiasm for the new serious music ideology may have developed in part as an attempt to preserve and enhance their status as cultural leaders.

THE WIDENING CONTEXT OF QUASI-FREELANCE MUSICAL ACTIVITY

Because the decline of the hauskapellen had a destabilizing effect on musical occupations, the new quasi-freelance musicians now had an economic interest in widening their circles of admirers and in furthering their reputations. As the prospect of domestic tenure in an aristocratic

kapelle became increasingly remote, career musicians of the 1790s turned of necessity to freelance strategies. During the 1790s and early 1800s, many career musicians wondered how they were to survive in this newer, less regularized economic environment and how a more impersonal clientele could be enlisted. Even Beethoven, who during these years was more securely ensconced in private patronage networks than any other Viennese-based composer apart from Haydn, expressed concern for the need to regularize music economics. As he remarks in an 1801 letter to one of his publishers, Franz Hoffmeister, "There ought to be in the world a *market for art* where the artist would only have to bring his works and take as much money as he needed" (Anderson 1961, 48; emphasis original).

One cause of this new form of economic insecurity for both musical workers and patrons was that late eighteenth-century career musicians, as Moore (n.d.a.) has shown, were operating in a noncash economy. Unlike their predecessors, who would have been tied to particular houses, 1790s musicians benefited far less from *Naturgeld*—the noncash presents of food and other necessary goods and clothing (such as uniforms and livery). As Moore has suggested, the emergence of quasi-freelance forms of income for musicians was not initially accompanied by improved economic status; if anything, the general economic position of musicians declined. During these transition years, musicians had to rely on ad hoc means of producing a living. Not surprisingly, therefore, they remained dependent on the patronage of wealthy aristocrats. Their most common sources of income during these years were teaching (a role musicians had traditionally performed in aristocratic households, churches, and so on), performing in privately sponsored concerts and salons, and small-scale, often subscription, publishing, supplemented with occasional benefit concerts. That the benefit concert remained an anomaly (a musician had to receive permission from the emperor to hold one) testifies to the peculiarly uncommercial character of Viennese musical life. While none of these income-generating practices was new to late eighteenth-century musical life, the importance of each was intensified during the 1790s because they became integral to a musician's economic survival. From a purely financial point of view, late eighteenth-century Viennese musicians would have welcomed opportunities for broadening the public basis of music consumption.

There were, however, obstacles to such a pursuit. First, institutional means for locating audiences were almost nonexistent. Second, the musicians' interest in broadening their public was hardly commensurate with the concerns and projects of music's traditional old aristocratic patrons, whose exclusive and controlling position as cultural leaders could be undermined by such a trend. To restructure patterns of music consumption from private resident ensembles to public and quasi-public concerts, and to do so without correspondingly attempting to relocate musical patronage's exclusionary basis in musical styles and forms of taste, was to erode the organizational mechanism through which distinction was sustained; it had the potential to deprive aristocratic distinction of its organizational and economic basis.

Whether they were aware of it or not, Vienna's aristocrats had a clear interest in impeding any large-scale public and commercial development of musical life by continuing to conduct most of their musical affairs in private. Indeed, the lively salon life of the 1790s did hinder the growth of a public musical life in Vienna (see also Morrow 1989, xv) in the sense that there was no need for public musical life as long as aristocrats were able to continue to conduct their musical lives in private. Although the number of public concerts did increase and facilitated the partial entry of the middle class and second society into musical affairs, this increase was relatively small in comparison with the thriving public concert life of London, which meant that there were limited opportunities in Vienna for occupational musicians. An implicit tension existed at this time between musicians (especially those musicians not singled out for aristocratic patronage) and music patrons. During the late 1790s and early 1800s, this tension was still usually resolved in favor of the patron, which had implications for the types of careers and acclaim available to musicians. This tension can be seen more clearly when we compare Viennese with London musical life.

In the second volume of the *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung*, a correspondent observes that "the Englishman . . . has thus gathered together in his country all along such a considerable number of the foremost artists of all types as are able to coexist elsewhere . . . the outward condition of music in England [is] so favorable that it cannot be matched elsewhere, where there is less inclination toward the great and where there are scantier expenditures" (trans. Milligan 1983, 2). The music business was booming in England during the 1790s in part because the English upper middle classes had more money to spend than their Viennese counterparts. England was, in general, more conducive to business enterprise; coupled with the fact that London's wealth tended to draw foreign musicians, this created a climate favorable to entrepreneurship by the musicians. London musical life was, not surprisingly, characterized

by diversity: in contrast with Vienna, there was no clearly demarcated aristocracy of taste (though there was a set of tastes—especially for old music—associated primarily with aristocrats). Although aristocrats did play an important part in musical life, musical patronage was a far less centralized, less hierarchical enterprise.

Though the anonymous *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung* author pointed to London as the land of "great" music, musical taste there was more flexible, more open to novelty, broader and more diverse, as measured by the sheer size of English repertories during this period. Compared with Vienna of the 1790s, London held far more opportunities for a musician to earn a living without additional private support. Simultaneously, however, London's career musicians were more firmly tied to popular and amateur tastes, a point illustrated in chapter 5, where I compare Beethoven's career with that of Jan Ladislav Dussek, a pianist-composer working in London during the 1790s.

Thus, as Arthur Loesser so aptly puts it, the London music world "cut wide but also shallow" (1954, 251). While there was an emerging ideology of canonic works in London, as the historian William Weber continues to document (1992), this ideology consisted of a growing historical consciousness of music, within which the works of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century composers (especially Handel) were revered, predominantly by aristocratic patrons. Unlike the Viennese, however, Londoners of the 1790s did not so easily extend the canon to contemporary musicians, and its proponents made this clear (Milligan 1983, chap. 1).[8] Although the aristocratic taste for "ancient music" in London was articulated in opposition to contemporary music, considered vulgar and decadent, it was by no means a dominant ideology; opportunities to produce and/or consume diverse musical styles abounded in London during the 1790s through subscription series, benefit concerts, oratorio performances, and garden concerts. In 1793, Doane's directory of musicians in London listed 1,333 "composers and professors" of music, though this list included amateurs, music sellers, copyists, and others. As the economic and social historian Cyril Ehrlich has noted, English musical life of the 1790s is not easily summarized. Three times the size of Vienna, London clearly provided a more extensive range of career opportunities for musicians:

> The gradual commercialization of music allowed [the musician in London] to escape into an open society but imposed new and unfamiliar risks . . . he lost old forms of security and the privilege of making music for a small, intimate and perhaps, cultivated circle. He gained a measure of freedom and access to

> diverse and potentially remunerative, if less discriminating, audiences and pupils. (Ehrlich 1985, 4)

In comparison, the structure of the Viennese music world remained conservative. Maynard Solomon (1977a, 65) has observed that the feudal mold was not broken at the time of Beethoven's arrival in Vienna. Rather, it was reshaped and adapted to altered circumstances. Whereas success in London was dependent more on the patronage of fellow musicians (and public concert organizers and impresarios), in Vienna it was virtually impossible for a local musician to build a successful concert career without the patronage of individual aristocratic concert hosts. Viennese musicians, therefore, remained reliant on the quality and quantity of the interpersonal links they were able to forge with private patrons. While aristocratic patronage practices certainly featured in London's richly textured concert life, in Vienna they were the mainstay of the musical scene. Thus aristocratic dominance of musical life in the 1790s, coupled with the decline of the hauskapellen and the subsequent diffusion of aristocratic patronage (and the shift in aristocratic focus to a newly emancipated pool of musicians ready for hire on an occasional basis), created a mismatch between the number of opportunities the Viennese system offered and the number of musicians in need of secure employment (Moore 1987, n.d.b.).

In this interim period, before new public concert institutions emerged and after traditional forums were significantly curtailed, musicians relied more than ever on capturing the attention of the sort of patrons who could offer them concert forums. Without previous private backing from aristocratic patrons, a musician found that the already scarce opportunities to present himself "to the public" became virtually nonexistent.

Just what the notion "public opinion" actually signified in late eighteenth-century Vienna cannot be assumed. While members of the high culture music "public" (the audiences at high culture music events) undoubtedly had opinions, the formulation and public articulation of these opinions were often extremely structured. "Public" success, recognition, and acclaim in late eighteenth-century Vienna should be conceived as inseparable from the selection processes conducted privately through individual channels by a few music-controlling people. We cannot hope to understand the vicissitudes of musical taste, success, and failure in Vienna without attending to the concerns, interrelations, and circumstances of the specific individuals who composed what can be called without exaggeration the city's musical power elite.

Because musical life was dependent on the activities of individuals rather than bureaucratic or commercial organizations, employment opportunities for musicians were far less regular, causing particular hardship for musicians after the hauskapellen were disbanded (Morrow 1989, 63–67; Moore 1987). For a composer like Beethoven, it was advantageous to comply with aristocrats since the institutional mechanisms for commercial musical life that were available during this time in London were not yet present in Vienna, and aristocratic, private support provided the kind of financial stability that most other composers during this transition period were unable to find. At aristocrat-sponsored public concerts, ticket prices were sometimes far higher than at nonaristocratic-sponsored events (Beethoven's 1803 benefit tickets, for example, were twelve times the normal price [see Moore 1987, 319]). In this way an event could remain exclusive while simultaneously providing a substantial benefit for the musician. Thus the absence of a highly articulated organizational basis for commercial musical activity in Vienna maintained the aristocratic monopoly over the consumption of serious music. For Beethoven, there was little economic incentive during the years around 1800 to cultivate Leopoldstadt audiences at the expense of his richer aristocratic patrons and the relative security and performance opportunities they were able to provide.

THE CONVERGENCE OF AESTHETIC AND SOCIAL PLANES

In chapter 2, I considered the emergence of the serious music ideology in the aristocratic music world between the late 1780s and the early 1800s. To reach a closer understanding of the ways aristocrats may have conceived of that culture, I described the views of its most extreme exponent, Baron van Swieten. Now, in light of the shifting organizational basis of musical patronage and its implications for aristocratic distinction, it is necessary to consider the extent to which van Swieten's vision of musical seriousness may have been linked to a concern for maintaining a special and dominant position in the Viennese music world. Exploring this issue requires speculation about what van Swieten may have meant when he complained about the "new evidence of decadence in the arts." We need, in other words, to find ways of recognizing the possible sincerity of van Swieten's belief in "those select few great men of our own time" while simultaneously recognizing that the cultural

practices associated with the baron's musical preferences were socially exclusionary.

From van Swieten's perspective—and from the perspective of his aristocratic GAC associates—the new "decadence" consisted in large part of an aversion to composers' and musicians' limited attempts to broaden their economic basis of support by appealing more overtly to the amateur performer (through easy-to-play pieces) and to new audiences through more flamboyant and virtuosic practices.[9] The new showmanship would no doubt have been perceived as undercutting the relevance of prior musical training and was therefore biased toward those composers with less experience in that they did not demand any special knowledge from their audiences. In musical terms, then, the new flamboyance was not commensurate with familiarity, skill, and study, and, in this respect, one can sympathize with the probable aristocratic concern that the whole enterprise of music making would be characterized by essentially nonmusical—that is, extramusical—features. In this sense, the emergence of the new showmanship could be viewed as "debasing" the participatory, dilettante music-making tradition and as undercutting many of the pleasures of participating in such a tradition. Aristocrats like van Swieten may have been reacting because their musical experience was being narrowed and made subservient to other forms.

At the same time, this view was only one way of understanding the issue. Whether van Swieten recognized it as such, the issue was simultaneously social and political because of the alignment of music patronage with the pursuit and maintenance of status. For the Viennese music aristocrats, the new "decadence" meant not only the deterioration of music but, equally important, the corruption of its audience, via the social broadening of that group. To the traditional heirs of musical taste, this threat, real or perceived, posed a problem of boundary maintenance and therefore of social pollution. It called for the sort of aristocratic response that could consolidate and cordon off the "true" from the "false" music audiences at a time when these distinctions were becoming blurred. Additionally, it meant that music aristocrats had to reconsider the issue of how to define themselves *as* music aristocrats (as opposed to other sorts of music consumers) and by doing so, identify their own level in this social sphere as an aristocracy of taste. One way to dramatize their identity was through the patronage of, as van Swieten put it, "great men"—heirs to "true music" and to the "great" tradition (that is, to the tradition before it became "tainted" with new qualities outside the control and

interest of the music aristocrats). In this way, van Swieten's version of an incipient canonic ideology may have coalesced with the practices by which some aristocrats during this period maintained and highlighted their particular position within the Viennese music world.

IDEOLOGICAL AND ECONOMIC PRECONDITIONS FOR MUSICAL GREATNESS

In Vienna during the 1790s, routes to independent commercial success in the musical field remained obstructed and individual aristocrats stayed secure in their role as gatekeepers for public exposure. Existing public forums were usually buttressed or underwritten with private means so that even the benefit concerts and sometimes music publications were not nearly as "public" or self-sustaining as they might appear to the casual observer. Thus the decline of the hauskapellen and the increased competition to which it led concentrated attention on a select few musicians, who were able to enjoy the best of both worlds: increased opportunities for earning a quasi-freelance income from teaching, publications, and public (benefit) concerts, as well as private backing from controlling aristocrats, which could underwrite the credibility of freelance activities. The result was the emergence of an organizational structure conducive to a star system, as Moore observes:

> A peculiar aspect of the new situation was that precisely those few musicians who were still protected by the security of the old patronage system, namely the Kapellmeister, were most likely to reap the financial rewards of the new musical free market, such as frequent access to theaters to give academies, larger publication fees, and so on. Haydn and Salieri are perhaps the clearest examples of artists who had the best of both worlds. The income inequalities outside of permanent positions extended beyond the infrequent opportunities to earn large sums via public concerts and publications, and even the single engagements that appealed to Mozart provided large fees for a few star performers, while the average musician was very badly paid. (1987, 420)

The category of musical celebrity was emerging in the 1790s Vienna independent of Beethoven. It was nurtured by an aristocratic concern with and receptivity to the notion of musical greatness, and given impetus by the shifting economic structure of patronage after the decline of the hauskapellen and before the rise of newer organizational means for musical production and dissemination. As Thayer puts it, "All the conditions precedent for the elevation of the art [of music] were just at this time fulfilled at Vienna and in one department—that of instrumental music—they existed in a degree unknown in any other city" (1967, 1:155).

Independent of Beethoven, then, the stage was set for a qualitatively different kind of musical greatness. I next address how a connection was made between this predisposition and Beethoven, rather than some other musician, and how Beethoven came to be positioned advantageously within the context of aristocratic patronage during the 1790s.

CHAPTER 9

Beethoven and the Resources of Cultural Authority

On at least one occasion by 1803, Beethoven's name and reputation were apparently secure enough to take precedence over the works lodged within them. According to Beethoven's pupil Ferdinand Ries:

> I was . . . able to observe the fact that for most people the name [Beethoven] alone is sufficient for them to judge everything in a work as either beautiful and perfect or mediocre and bad. One day, tired of playing from memory I played a March just as it came into my head. . . . An old Countess went into raptures of admiration because she imagined it was a new piece by him. In order to have some amusement . . . I hastened to assure them that this was so.[1]

To Ries's embarrassment, Beethoven soon arrived at the same household, where "he then received extravagant panegyrics on his genius. . . . Later he said to me, 'look here, my dear Ries! Those are the great connoisseurs. . . . Just give them the name of their favorite: that's all they need'" (Landon 1970a, 39–40).[2]

If we are to take Ries at his word, by 1803 the cultural machinery for producing and reproducing Beethoven's genius had been assembled. Among Beethoven's ever-widening base of supporters, the name "Beethoven" had become compelling in its own right. At the same time, not everyone appreciated Beethoven's talents. To the contrary (as discussed in chapter 7), Beethoven reception appears to have grown more sharply polarized over time; his official success was constructed alongside other, competing versions of his identity.

"A relatively small group," Loesser once observed, "of accomplished amateurs, connoisseurs, snobs and romantically minded devotees of 'the

grandiose' as they liked to say, were the carriers of [Beethoven's] repute; they were an official lot that could not be readily opposed. To most people, Beethoven's reputation was an article of superstition" (1954, 146). Loesser's point, though unsupported by evidence, is nevertheless suggestive. It highlights how forms of cultural authority may be privately resisted but publicly allowed to pass. This passage may be due to the fact that cultures are sponsored by individuals or groups who are culturally insulated from challenge (for example, because they have been the traditional leaders in some arena). Alternately, the social means for such challenge may be remote (for example, because potential challengers are not fluent in "appropriate" forms of discourse, or they lack the kinds of material resources necessary for a major campaign).

Because Loesser does not delve into questions of social process, he is only able to caricature the means by which Beethoven became an official success during his first decade in Vienna. That success did not derive simply from the fact that Beethoven's supporters "could not be readily opposed"; indeed, as we have seen, they were opposed. Consequently, the study of Beethoven's success and the construction of his claim to legitimacy needs to be viewed in light of the varieties of communicative media available to his supporters and opponents for constructing his artistic reputation. We should not, in other words, talk about constituencies of taste for and against Beethoven without examining the construction of a cultural, organizational, and technological environment for Beethoven's talent and its perception in Vienna.

Beethoven's claim to legitimate success and recognition became powerful because his exceptional abilities were accompanied by and interacted with a network of practices, musical-critical discourse, and music technology produced over time by Beethoven and his "support personnel"—his patrons and other musical assistants. Beethoven succeeded because a complex network was constructed and oriented to the production and perception of his talent. Opposition to Beethoven was less securely embedded in practices, in discourse, and in technology. As the aesthetic and evaluative musical climate was altered through the structuring activities of pro-Beethoven culture creators, the resources for dissent became, at least for a time, fairly remote.[3]

A discrepancy existed between the reception of Beethoven's talent (which was clearly mixed and possibly polarized) and that reception as it was publicly dramatized by those who believed (or wanted to believe) in it and who helped to ensure that it would be represented in flattering ways. The history of Beethoven's success is thus the history of a culture's

creation, the formation and implementation of instruments and devices according to which an image of Beethoven as an extraordinary talent could be broadcast to various audiences. The history of Beethoven's reputation and success among his contemporaries during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, therefore, is the history of the *representation* of reputation, and not merely of reputation per se.

To focus on the representation of Beethoven's talent is by no means to depict Beethoven and supporters as hyperrational managers of Beethoven's image, as if they set out from the start to market Beethoven's art. I have meant neither to imply such a cynical interpretation nor to imply that Beethoven and his patrons were marketing a "finished product." Such an account oversimplifies the complex social processes I have described; it also tends to evade the ways in which Beethoven's own artistic activities, his self-perception, and the elaboration of a supportive climate for his reception interacted over time.

In retrospect, Beethoven's talent is viewed in ways that highlight its "extraordinary" quality. But in the making, it was accumulated gradually, practically, and unremarkably, in time and space, neither preordained nor planned in its entirety. To suggest that his success, and the particular configuration of music history to which it gave rise, was the result of his music alone and not of the interaction of that music with its context of reception is to employ a retrospective fallacy: it is to see the events of the past through the wrong end of the telescope, accepting the belief that the past inevitably "leads" to present circumstances. Surely this is an impoverished conception of history.

BEETHOVEN IN THE 1790s AND BEYOND

Without doubt, Beethoven survives today not simply because of his initial success among his Viennese contemporaries,[4] but because the model forged during these years of Beethoven as a prototypically serious composer was discovered as a cultural resource and elaborated by subsequent musicians and music entrepreneurs.[5] Certainly one line of future research (which would shed further light on the issue of the canonic ideology and on the emergence of Beethoven's international reputation) would be a comparative study of Beethoven reception in diverse geographical and historical contexts during the years after 1805. There has been some work done on this topic: Leo Schrade's 1910 classic on Beethoven in France, William S. Newman's consideration of the origins of the "Beethoven mystique" (1983), and, more recently, James Johnson's reexamination of Beethoven reception in France (1991).[6] The importance of Beethoven's first decade in Vienna to his subsequent and posthumous reputation must not be exaggerated. At the same time, Beethoven's initial rise provided a cultural resource for the social transformation of high culture musical aesthetics, repertory, and programming practice during the early nineteenth century. In my consideration of these issues I have stayed close to the level of social action; I would hope that subsequent work on the construction of Beethoven's reputation would move further afield to consider the cultural context more broadly and, in particular, to focus on the ways that literary culture, political ideas and philosophy were implicated in this process. At present we know little about the culturally constructed subjectivity of Beethoven's patrons.

BEETHOVEN, THE CONSTRUCTION OF GENIUS, AND THE RELATIVITY OF VALUE

Little has been written about genius as a social construction. The ideology of genius—that some individuals are endowed with extraordinary gifts enabling them to penetrate and radically transform the logic of their particular intellectual creative field—remains powerful and persuasive in spite of attempts to deconstruct it. The belief, for example, that we know greatness when we see it is a pervasive part of our common sense. Genius continues to be shrouded in mystery. One academic writer has suggested that "no amount of analysis has yet been able to explain the capacities of those rare and gifted individuals who can produce creative work of lasting quality and value" (Murray 1989, 1). It is perhaps not surprising, therefore, that ethnographically and historically grounded explorations of genius as socially constructed have not yet been produced.[7]

Throughout this book, I have tried to illustrate how conventional ways of accounting for Beethoven's success through reference to his individual and charismatic "gift" elide the complex and collaborative processes of mobilizing resources, presentation devices, and practical activities that produced Beethoven's cultural authority. Accounts of Beethoven's success that focus on his talent inappropriately employ a language of attribution, which is an impoverished way of talking, one that obscures the social context in which his identity was initially produced.

We cannot point to Beethoven's "originality" as an explanatory factor for Beethoven's success. To say that Beethoven's music is "better" because it is more original makes a tautological argument: it misses a cru-

cial sociological point—namely, that to recognize something as original is to recognize it as located somewhat outside of (and possibly commenting on) conventional criteria of one kind or another. For difference or "originality" to be valued, it has to be recognized as being aligned with "different" criteria. If this alignment is not recognized, difference risks being perceived as "misdirection" or "nonsense" or "off the mark." To be sure, nearly all of Beethoven's contemporaries perceived his work as "different" and many described it as "original." No automatic connection was made, however, from this perception to the valuing of Beethoven's works, to ranking Beethoven above his contemporaries. That connection had to be *made* by Beethoven and his contemporaries. The reviews of op. 12 (remarking on Beethoven's "bizarre and singular" manner) published in 1799—by which time Beethoven's initial reputation as a "genius" was being consolidated—or the mixed reception of op. 10 (where Beethoven is simultaneously described as a "genius" and "original" and criticized for being overly complex—make the initial equivocality of Beethoven's talent clear. In the 1790s, musical "originality" was not automatically equated with musical value.

To say "it could have been otherwise"—that, for example, there could have been a musical-aesthetic world in which Beethoven's works and reputation would not have "blossomed"—or to say that one can imagine a world in which other types of creative products might be valued more highly is not to say that now, in subsequent musical contexts, alternatives *are* equally valid. The point of this study has been to show precisely the opposite: to describe how a particular musical-evaluative context was cultivated and how this process resulted in making particular types of evaluative tools readily available as "legitimate" musical evaluative categories. Within modern musicological circles, it is quite difficult to construct a convincing argument that the music of Wölffl, for instance, is "better" than Beethoven's, even though some of Beethoven's contemporaries suggested just that. To ask, Who is a genius? or What factors "cause" or inculcate genius? is to travel to the topic with too much a priori baggage. Such an attitude fails to recognize how, in invoking the very category "genius," we presume a hierarchy of talent, as if this distribution existed outside of our attempts to frame questions about it. In this sense, asking who the geniuses are presumes a particular type of hierarchical social organization.

It is an existential fact of life that the social institutions, discourses, and disciplines which enable us to live and communicate with each other simultaneously perpetrate symbolic violence: what is facilitating for some may be constraining for others. Recognizing this double nature of conventions enlivens us to the micro- and macropolitical consequences of matters of taste, talent, and value. Writing about Jan Ladislav Dussek's father, the eighteenth-century music historian Charles Burney alluded to these issues when he invoked a line from Thomas Gray's "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard" ("Chill penury repressed his noble rage"). The poem's message as it unfolds in the following quatrain is also worth recalling:

> Full many a gem of purest ray serene
> The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear
> Full many a flower born is born to blush unseen,
> and waste its sweetness on the desert air.

There is much more to learn about how value and extraordinary ability emerge as recognizably "real" entities. We can continue to add to our knowledge by following, as they unfold, the processes through which value is assembled. To do so may lead to a richer awareness of the social bases and social uses of identity. We will understand more about how some individuals become lodged within preferred identities, while there remain others to whom entry is denied.

by diversity: in contrast with Vienna, there was no clearly demarcated aristocracy of taste (though there was a set of tastes—especially for old music—associated primarily with aristocrats). Although aristocrats did play an important part in musical life, musical patronage was a far less centralized, less hierarchical enterprise.

Though the anonymous *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung* author pointed to London as the land of "great" music, musical taste there was more flexible, more open to novelty, broader and more diverse, as measured by the sheer size of English repertories during this period. Compared with Vienna of the 1790s, London held far more opportunities for a musician to earn a living without additional private support. Simultaneously, however, London's career musicians were more firmly tied to popular and amateur tastes, a point illustrated in chapter 5, where I compare Beethoven's career with that of Jan Ladislav Dussek, a pianist-composer working in London during the 1790s.

Thus, as Arthur Loesser so aptly puts it, the London music world "cut wide but also shallow" (1954, 251). While there was an emerging ideology of canonic works in London, as the historian William Weber continues to document (1992), this ideology consisted of a growing historical consciousness of music, within which the works of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century composers (especially Handel) were revered, predominantly by aristocratic patrons. Unlike the Viennese, however, Londoners of the 1790s did not so easily extend the canon to contemporary musicians, and its proponents made this clear (Milligan 1983, chap. 1).[8] Although the aristocratic taste for "ancient music" in London was articulated in opposition to contemporary music, considered vulgar and decadent, it was by no means a dominant ideology; opportunities to produce and/or consume diverse musical styles abounded in London during the 1790s through subscription series, benefit concerts, oratorio performances, and garden concerts. In 1793, Doane's directory of musicians in London listed 1,333 "composers and professors" of music, though this list included amateurs, music sellers, copyists, and others. As the economic and social historian Cyril Ehrlich has noted, English musical life of the 1790s is not easily summarized. Three times the size of Vienna, London clearly provided a more extensive range of career opportunities for musicians:

> The gradual commercialization of music allowed [the musician in London] to escape into an open society but imposed new and unfamiliar risks . . . he lost old forms of security and the privilege of making music for a small, intimate and perhaps, cultivated circle. He gained a measure of freedom and access to diverse and potentially remunerative, if less discriminating, audiences and pupils. (Ehrlich 1985, 4)

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